

# The Modern Mystic

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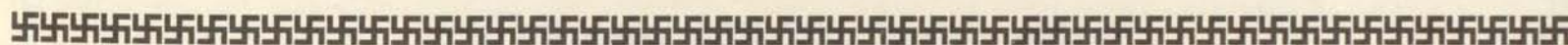
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## Our Point of View

THE ARTICLE BY MRS. KOLISKO which appeared in our last issue completes the series. Some account of her future movements will be found elsewhere in this issue. We hope, on Mrs. Kolisko's return from India to publish a further series of articles by her. We hope too, that those of our readers who appreciate the real value of Mrs. Kolisko's researches,—and we know they are many,—will, if they can afford it, send along a contribution towards the cost of the new laboratory at Bray, a laboratory from which great things are expected. Donations, however small, will be welcomed, and may be sent to this office. Envelopes should be marked "Laboratory Fund" in the top left-hand corner.

Mr. Walter Rummel is a pianist of exceptional capacity. Music lovers susceptible to the claims of the pianoforte as a medium are recommended to attend one or both of this artist's concerts to be given at the Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, London, W.1, on the evenings of December 9th and 10th.

Readers will observe that Mr. Rummel will also play at Rudolf Steiner Hall during the special "Art" week, particulars of which will be found in the advertisement on the inside front cover of this issue.

We make no apology for the inclusion in this issue of a work of fiction. Anatole France was an artist of a very high order. His knowledge of mythology and classical literature was probably unequalled in his day, as was his love for them. If he brought to them the love of the scholar rather than the searcher for what was occult in them; if he touched them with the lightness of the artist rather than the rougher handling of the utilitarian, our debt to him is none the less. For in the midst of a notoriously vulgar and materialistic age they helped him to formulate his philosophy of Irony and of Pity; he kept alive by his exquisite artistry a knowledge of the *sources* of occult learning. The love of letters with which he endowed *Sylvestre Bonnard* and which produced the quiet, domestic felicity of that unassuming scholar, was the projection by a young man of 35 of his own subsequent



career and character confirmed by the chosen few who, towards the close of the author's life, enjoyed the hospitality of *La Béchellerie*.

Will readers please note that Mrs. Kolisko's "Moon and Plant Growth" is now entirely sold out? No further copies will be available. Rudolf Steiner's "Outline of Occult Science" is temporarily out of print, and a new edition is in course of preparation. Only a few copies are left of Alan W. Watts' *Legacy of Asia and Modern Man* and of H.E. Baron Palmstierna's *Horizons of Immortality*. The first consignment of Dr. Spencer Lewis's *Secret Doctrines of Jesus* was sold out within forty-eight hours of publication of our last issue. We therefore crave the indulgence of readers whose orders for the book remain unexecuted. A further consignment is on the way from America.

The artistic event of the month was undoubtedly the visit of Toscanini. The Beethoven 9th (choral) symphony was so perfect as to silence criticism. Mr. Bernard Shore (B.B.C. leader of

preposterous improvisation which, as in the case of the *Delius Mass of Life*, gives a sense of inevitability and grandeur to the work."

But one feels that Mr. Russell himself is not without a lively intuition when he writes: "It is, I believe, a tenet of the Buddhist faith that not only Gautama himself, but any believer may reach the state of Buddha . . . ordinary phases of thought and intellect are left behind, and these processes of the mind are replaced by intuition. . . . This, then is a key to the understanding of Beecham's genius, and whilst I will not call him a Buddha, he is certainly intuitive. . . ." Beecham is unquestionably a genius, and an unusually versatile one at that. He is by far the greatest British conductor ever, and it is doubtful whether we shall see his like again.

Those who have already written to us asking about binding cases for volume one of *THE MODERN MYSTIC* will be interested in the announcement in this issue that an excellent case in

The Editor wishes all Readers and Friends  
of the Modern Mystic and lovers of  
the Ancient Wisdom  
a Very Happy  
CHRISTMAS

violins) wrote an article in the *Daily Telegraph* attempting to disclose the methods by which the Italian master obtains his effects. A similar, but more convincing effort on the technique of Sir Thomas Beecham was that of Mr. Thomas A. Russell in *Musical Opinion*. Probably no such shrewd estimate of Beecham's capacity has ever been written. The point of view is that of the orchestral player. Everybody interested in music is astonished at Beecham's remarkable memory, and one feels that Mr. Russell's explanation of the phenomenon is probably correct. He says: "His extraordinary feats of memory have become almost a commonplace of musical history; but it is interesting to speculate on the process by which the music is stored in his head. He does this more by assimilation than by conscious mental effort. When, for example, Albert Wolff conducts *Pelleas* without score, one feels that after a prolonged mental effort he has engraved on his mind the whole contents of the printed score. With Beecham, on the other hand, the impression is that he has absorbed the music in a way which would have been possible had he never seen it in black and white at all. He creates the effect of some

"mystic" blue cloth, gold-embossed spine is now ready at a moderate price. In our next issue we shall include a complete index of the twelve numbers constituting volume one. Only very few copies of our early numbers are now available, and those who may be short of one or more issues and would like to have the volume complete should not delay in securing them. In addition to the cloth binding case, there will be a *de luxe* case in leather, price on application. A limited number of complete volumes, ready bound in blue cloth, will also be available at thirty shillings the volume, carriage paid.

Books are friends. There is no more suitable Christmas gift. Readers' attention is drawn to the list of recommended books in pages 62 and 63. The list has been carefully "combed" and contains no rubbish.

On the principle that an ounce of proof is worth a ton of precept, we are glad to reiterate our thanks to the Editor of the

(continued in page 13)



# Balthasar\*

by Anatole France

Translated from the French by Mrs. John Lane

"*Magos reges fere habuit Oriens.*"

TERTULLIAN.

**I**N THOSE DAYS BALTHASAR, whom the Greeks called Saracin, reigned in Ethiopia. He was black, but comely of countenance. He had a simple soul and a generous heart.

The third year of his reign, which was the twenty-second of his age, he left his dominions on a visit to Balkis, Queen of Sheba. The mage Sembobitis and the eunuch Menkera accompanied him. He had in his train seventy-five camels bearing cinnamon, myrrh, gold dust, and elephants' tusks.

As they rode, Sembobitis instructed him in the influences of the planets, as well as in the virtues of precious stones, and Menkera sang to him canticles from the sacred mysteries. He paid but little heed to them, but amused himself instead watching the jackals with their ears pricked up, sitting erect on the edge of the desert.

At last, after a march of twelve days, Balthasar became conscious of the fragrance of roses, and very soon they saw the gardens that surround the city of Sheba. On their way they passed young girls dancing under pomegranate trees in full bloom.

"The dance," said Sembobitis the mage, "is a prayer."

"One could sell these women for a great price," said Menkera the eunuch.

As they entered the city they were amazed at the extent of the sheds and warehouses and workshops that lay before them, and also at the immense quantities of merchandise with which these were piled.

For a long time they walked through streets thronged with chariots, street porters, donkeys and donkey-drivers, until all at once the marble walls, the purple awnings and the gold cupolas of the palace of Balkis, lay spread out before them.

The Queen of Sheba received them in a courtyard cooled by jets of perfumed water which fell with a tinkling cadence like a shower of pearls.

Smiling, she stood before them in a jewelled robe.

At sight of her Balthasar was greatly troubled.

She seemed to him lovelier than a dream and more beautiful than desire.

"My lord," and Sembobitis spoke under his breath, "remember to conclude a good commercial treaty with the queen."

"Have a care, my lord," Menkera added. "It is said she employs magic with which to gain the love of men."

Then, having prostrated themselves, the mage and the eunuch retired.

Balthasar, left alone with Balkis, tried to speak; he opened his mouth but he could not utter a word. He said to himself, "The queen will be angered at my silence."

But the queen still smiled and looked not at all angry. She was the first to speak with a voice sweeter than the sweetest music.

"Be welcome, and sit down at my side." And with a slender finger like a ray of white light she pointed to the purple cushions on the ground. Balthasar sat down, gave a great sigh, and grasping a cushion in each hand he cried hastily:

"Madam, I would these two cushions were two giants, your enemies; I would wring their necks."

And as he spoke he clutched the cushions with such violence in his hands that the delicate stuff cracked and out flew a cloud of snow-white down. One of the tiny feathers swayed a moment in the air and then alighted on the bosom of the queen.

"My lord Balthasar," Balkis said, blushing; "why do you wish to kill giants?"

"Because I love you," said Balthasar.

"Tell me," Balkis asked, "is the water good in the wells of your capital?"

"Yes," Balthasar replied in some surprise.

"I am also curious to know," Balkis continued, "how a dry conserve of fruit is made in Ethiopia?"

The king did not know what to answer.

"Now please tell me, please," she urged.

Whereupon with a mighty effort of memory he tried to describe how Ethiopian cooks preserve quinces in honey. But she did not listen. And suddenly, she interrupted him.

"My lord, it is said that you love your neighbour, Queen Candace. Is she more beautiful than I am? Do not deceive me."



Photo by Choumoff

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"More beautiful than you, madam," Balthasar cried as he fell at the feet of Balkis, "how could that possibly be!"

"Well, then, her eyes? her mouth? her colour? her throat?" the queen continued.

With his arms outstretched towards her, Balthasar cried:

"Give me but the little feather that has fallen on your neck and in return you shall have half my kingdom as well as the wise Sembobitis and Menkera the eunuch."

But she rose and fled with a ripple of clear laughter.

When the mage and the eunuch returned they found their master plunged deep in thought which was not his custom.

"My lord!" asked Sembobitis, "have you concluded a good commercial treaty?"

That day Balthasar supped with the Queen of Sheba and drank the wine of the palm-tree.

"It is true, then," said Balkis as they supped together, "that Queen Candace is not so beautiful as I?"

"Queen Candace is black," replied Balthasar.

Balkis looked expressively at Balthasar.

"One may be black and yet not ill-looking," she said.

"Balkis!" cried the king.

He said no more, but seized her in his arms, and the head of the queen sank back under the pressure of his lips. But he saw that she was weeping. Thereupon he spoke to her in the low, caressing tones that nurses use to their nurslings. He called her his little blossom and his little star.

"Why do you weep?" he asked. "And what must one do to dry your tears? If you have a desire tell me and it shall be fulfilled."

She ceased weeping, but she was sunk deep in thought. He implored her a long time to tell him her desire. And at last she spoke.

"I wish to know fear."

And as Balthasar did not seem to understand, she explained to him that for a long time past she had greatly longed to face some unknown danger, but she could not, for the men and gods of Sheba watched over her.

"And yet," she added with a sigh, "during the night I long to feel the delicious chill of terror penetrate my flesh. To have my hair stand up on my head with horror. O! it would be such joy to be afraid!"

She twined her arms about the neck of the dusky king, and said with the voice of a pleading child:

"Night has come. Let us go through the town in disguise. Are you willing?"

He agreed. She ran to the window at once and looked through the lattice into the square below.

"A beggar is lying against the palace wall. Give him your garments and ask him in exchange for his camel-hair turban and the coarse cloth girt about his loins. Be quick and I will dress myself."

And she ran out of the banqueting-hall joyfully clapping her hands one against the other.

Balthasar took off his linen tunic embroidered with gold and girded himself with the skirt of the beggar. It gave him the look of a real slave. The queen soon reappeared dressed in the blue seamless garment of the women who work in the fields.

"Come!" she said.

And she dragged Balthasar along the narrow corridors towards a little door which opened on the fields.

## II

The night was dark, and in the darkness of the night Balkis looked very small.

She led Balthasar to one of the taverns where wastrels and street porters foregathered along with prostitutes. The two sat down at a table and saw through the foul air by the light of a fetid lamp, unclean human brutes attack each other with fists and knives for a woman or a cup of fermented liquor, while others with clenched fists snored under the tables. The tavern-keeper, lying on a pile of sacking, watched the drunken brawlers with a prudent eye. Balkis, having seen some salt fish hanging from the rafters of the ceiling, said to her companion:

"I much wish to eat one of these fish with pounded onions."

Balthasar gave the order. When she had eaten he discovered that he had forgotten to bring money. It gave him no concern, for he thought that he could slip out with her without paying the reckoning. But the tavern-keeper barred their way, calling them a vile slave and a worthless she-ass. Balthasar struck him to the ground with a blow of his fist. Whereupon some of the drinkers drew their knives and flung themselves on the two strangers. But the black man, seizing an enormous pestle used to pound Egyptian onions, knocked down two of his assailants and forced the others back. And all the while he was conscious of the warmth of Balkis' body as she cowered close against him; it was this which made him invincible.

The tavern-keeper's friends, not daring to approach again, flung at him from the end of the pot-house jars of oil, pewter vessels, burning lamps, and even the huge bronze cauldron in which a whole sheep was stewing. This cauldron fell with a horrible crash on Balthasar's head and split his skull. For a moment he stood as if dazed, and then summoning all his strength he flung the cauldron back with such force that its weight was increased tenfold. The shock of the hurtling metal was mingled with indescribable roars and death rattles. Profiting by the terror of the survivors, and fearing that Balkis might be injured, he seized her in his arms and fled with her through the silence and darkness of the lonely byways. The stillness of night enveloped the earth, and the fugitives heard the clamour of the women and the carousers, who pursued them at haphazard, die away in the darkness. Soon they heard nothing more than the sound of dripping blood as it fell from the brow of Balthasar on the breast of Balkis.

"I love you," the queen murmured.

And by the light of the moon as it emerged from behind a cloud the king saw the white and liquid radiance of her half-closed eyes. They descended the dry bed of a stream, and suddenly Balthasar's foot slipped on the moss and they fell together locked in each other's embrace. They seemed to sink forever into a delicious void, and the world of the living ceased to exist for them. They were still plunged in the enchanting forgetfulness of time, space and separate existence, when at daybreak the gazelles came to drink out of the hollows among the stones.

At that moment a passing band of brigands discovered the two lovers lying on the moss.

"They are poor," they said, "but we shall sell them for a great price, for they are so young and beautiful."



Upon which they surrounded them, and having bound them they tied them to the tail of an ass and proceeded on their way.

The black man so bound threatened the brigands with death. But Balkis, who shivered in the cool, fresh air of the morning, only smiled, as if at something unseen.

They tramped through frightful solitudes until the heat of mid-day made itself felt. The sun was already high when the brigands unbound their prisoners, and, letting them sit in the shade of a rock, threw them some mouldy bread which Balthasar disdained to touch but which Balkis ate greedily.

She laughed. And when the brigand chief asked why she laughed, she replied :

"I laugh at the thought that I shall have you all hanged."

"Indeed!" cried the chief, "a curious assertion in the mouth of a scullery wench like you, my love! Doubtless you will hang us all by aid of that blackamoor gallant of yours?"

At this insult Balthasar flew into a fearful rage, and he flung himself on the brigand and clutched his neck with such violence that he nearly strangled him.

But the other drew his knife and plunged it into his body to the very hilt. The poor king rolled to earth, and as he turned on Balkis a dying glance his sight faded.

### III

At this moment was heard an uproar of men, horses and weapons, and Balkis recognised her trusty Abner who had come at the head of her guards to rescue his queen, of whose mysterious disappearance he had heard during the night.

Three times he prostrated himself at the feet of Balkis, and ordered the litter to advance which had been prepared to receive her. In the meantime the guards bound the hands of the brigands. The queen turned towards the chief and said gently: "You cannot accuse me of having made you an idle promise, my friend, when I said you would be hanged."

The mage Sembobitis and Menkera the eunuch, who stood beside Abner, gave utterance to terrible cries when they saw their king lying motionless on the ground with a knife in his stomach. They raised him with great care. Sembobitis, who was highly versed in the science of medicine, saw that he still breathed. He applied a temporary bandage while Menkera wiped the foam from the king's lips. Then they bound him to a horse and led him gently to the palace of the queen.

For fifteen days Balthasar lay in the agonies of delirium. He raved without ceasing of the steaming cauldron and the moss in the ravine, and he incessantly cried aloud for Balkis. At last, on the sixteenth day, he opened his eyes and saw at his bedside Sembobitis and Menkera, but he did not see the queen.

"Where is she? What is she doing?"

"My lord," replied Menkera, "she is closeted with the King of Comagena."

"They are doubtless agreeing to an exchange of merchandise," added the sage Sembobitis.

"But be not so disturbed, my lord, or you will redouble your fever."

"I must see her," cried Balthasar. And he flew towards the apartments of the queen, and neither the sage nor the eunuch could restrain him. On nearing the bedchamber he beheld the King of Comagena come forth covered with gold and glittering

like the sun. Balkis, smiling and with eyes closed, lay on a purple couch.

"My Balkis, my Balkis!" cried Balthasar.

She did not even turn her head but seemed to prolong a dream.

Balthasar approached and took her hand which she rudely snatched away.

"What do you want?" she said.

"Do you ask?" the black king answered, and burst into tears.

She turned on him her hard, calm eyes.

Then he realised that she had forgotten everything, and he reminded her of the night of the stream.

"In truth, my lord," said she, "I do not know to what you refer. The wine of the palm does not agree with you. You must have dreamed."

"What," cried the unhappy king, wringing his hands, "your kisses, and the knife which has left its mark on me, are these dreams?"

She rose; the jewels on her robe made a sound as of hail and flashed forth lightnings.

"My lord," she said, "it is the hour my council assembles. I have not the leisure to interpret the dreams of your suffering brain. Take some repose. Farewell."

Balthasar felt himself sinking, but with a supreme effort not to betray his weakness to this wicked woman, he ran to his room where he fell in a swoon and his wound re-opened.

### IV

For three weeks he remained unconscious and as one dead, but having on the twenty-second day recovered his senses, he seized the hand of Sembobitis, who, with Menkera, watched over him, and cried, weeping:

"O, my friends, how happy you are, one to be old and the other the same as old. But no! there is no happiness on earth, everything is bad, for love is an evil and Balkis is wicked."

"Wisdom confers happiness," replied Sembobitis.

"I will try it," said Balthasar. "But let us depart at once for Ethiopia." And as he had lost all he loved he resolved to consecrate himself to wisdom and to become a mage. If this decision gave him no especial pleasure it at least restored to him something of tranquillity. Every evening, seated on the terrace of his palace in company with the sage Sembobitis and Menkera the eunuch, he gazed at the palm-trees standing motionless against the horizon, or watched the crocodiles by the light of the moon float down the Nile like trunks of trees.

"One never wearies of admiring the beauties of Nature," said Sembobitis.

"Doubtless," said Balthasar, "but there are other things in Nature more beautiful even than palm-trees and crocodiles."

This he said thinking of Balkis. But Sembobitis, who was old, said:

"There is of course the phenomenon of the rising of the Nile which I have explained. Man is created to understand."

"He is created to love," replied Balthasar sighing. "There are things which cannot be explained."

"And what may those be?" asked Sembobitis.



"A woman's treason," the king replied.

Balthasar, however, having decided to become a mage, had a tower built from the summit of which might be discerned many kingdoms and the infinite spaces of Heaven. The tower was constructed of brick and rose high above all other towers. It took no less than two years to build, and Balthasar expended in its construction the entire treasure of the king, his father. Every night he climbed to the top of this tower and there he studied the heavens under the guidance of the sage Sembobitis.

"The constellations of the heavens disclose our destiny," said Sembobitis.

And he replied:

"It must be admitted nevertheless that these signs are obscure. But while I study them I forget Balkis, and that is a great boon."

And among truths most useful to know, the mage taught that the stars are fixed like nails in the arch of the sky, and that there are five planets, namely: Bel, Merodach, and Nebo, which are male, while Sin and Mylitta are female.

"Silver," he further explained, "corresponds to Sin, which is the moon, iron to Merodach, and tin to Bel."

And the worthy Balthasar answered: "Such is the kind of knowledge I wish to acquire. While I study astronomy I think neither of Balkis nor anything else on earth. The sciences are beneficent; they keep men from thinking. Teach me the knowledge, Sembobitis, which destroys all feeling in men and I will raise you to great honour among my people."

This was the reason that Sembobitis taught the king wisdom.

He taught him the power of incantation, according to the principles of Astrampsychos, Gobryas and Pazatas. And the more Balthasar studied the twelve houses of the sun, the less he thought of Balkis, and Menkera, observing this, was filled with a great joy.

"Acknowledge, my lord, that Queen Balkis under her golden robes has little cloven feet like a goat's."

"Who ever told you such nonsense?" asked the King.

"My lord, it is the common report both in Sheba and Ethiopia," replied the eunuch. "It is universally said that Queen Balkis has a shaggy leg and a foot made of two black horns."

Balthasar shrugged his shoulders. He knew that the legs and feet of Balkis were like the legs and feet of all other women and perfect in their beauty. And yet the mere idea spoiled the remembrance of her whom he had so greatly loved. He felt a grievance against Balkis that her beauty was not without blemish in the imagination of those who knew nothing about it. At the thought that he had possessed a woman who, though in reality perfectly formed, passed as a monstrosity, he was seized with such a sense of repugnance that he had no further desire to see Balkis again. Balthasar had a simple soul, but love is a very complex emotion.

From that day on the king made great progress both in magic and astrology. He studied the conjunction of the stars with extreme care, and he drew horoscopes with an accuracy equal to that of Sembobitis himself.

"Sembobitis," he asked, "are you willing to answer with your head for the truth of my horoscopes?"

And the sage Sembobitis replied:

"My lord, science is infallible, but the learned often err."

Balthasar was endowed with fine natural sense. He said:

"Only that which is true is divine, and what is divine is hidden from us. In vain we search for truth. And yet I have discovered a new star in the sky. It is a beautiful star, and it seems alive; and when it sparkles it looks like a celestial eye that blinks gently. I seem to hear it call to me. Happy, happy, happy is he who is born under this star. See, Sembobitis, how this charming and splendid star looks at us."

But Sembobitis did not see the star because he would not see it. Wise and old, he did not like novelties.

And alone in the silence of night Balthasar repeated: "Happy, happy, happy he who is born under this star."

## V

The rumour spread over all Ethiopia and the neighbouring kingdoms that King Balthasar had ceased to love Balkis.

When the tidings reached the country of Sheba, Balkis was as indignant as if she had been betrayed. She ran to the King of Comagena who was employing his time in forgetting his country in the city of Sheba.

"My friend," she cried, "do you know what I have just heard? Balthasar loves me no longer!"

"What does it matter," said the King of Comagena, "since we love one another?"

"But do you not feel how this blackamoor has insulted me?"

"No," said the King of Comagena, "I do not."

Whereupon she drove him ignominiously out of her presence, and ordered her grand vizier to prepare for a journey into Ethiopia.

"We shall set out this very night. And I shall cut off your head if all is not ready by sundown."

But when she was alone she began to sob.

"I love him! He loves me no longer, and I love him," she sighed in the sincerity of her heart.

And one night, when on his tower watching the miraculous star, Balthasar, casting his eyes towards earth, saw a long black line sinuously curving over the distant sands of the desert like an army of ants. Little by little what seemed to be ants grew larger and sufficiently distinct for the king to be able to recognise horses, camels and elephants.

The caravan having approached the city, Balthasar distinguished the glittering scimitars and the black horses of the guards of the Queen of Sheba. He even recognised the queen herself, and he was profoundly disturbed, for he felt that he would again love her. The star shone in the zenith with a marvellous brilliancy. Below, extended on a litter of purple and gold, Balkis looked small and brilliant like the star.

Balthasar was conscious of being drawn towards her by some terrible power. Still he turned his head away with a desperate effort, and lifting his eyes he again saw the star. Thereupon the star spoke and said: "Glory to God in the Heavens and peace on earth to men of good will!"

"Take a measure of myrrh, gentle King Balthasar, and follow me. I will guide thee to the feet of a little child who is about to be born in a stable between an ass and an ox."



"And this little child is the King of Kings. He will comfort all those who need comforting.

"He calls thee to Him, O Balthasar, thou whose soul is as dark as thy face, but whose heart is as guileless as the heart of a child.

"He has chosen thee because thou hast suffered, and He will give thee riches, happiness and love.

"He will say to thee: 'Be poor joyfully, for that is true riches.' He will also say to thee: 'True happiness is in the renunciation of happiness. Love Me and love none other but Me, because I alone am love.'"

At these words a divine peace fell like a flood of light over the dark face of the king.

Balthasar listened with rapture to the star. He felt himself becoming a new man.

Prostrate beside him, Sembobitis and Menkera worshipped, their faces touching the stone.

Queen Balkis watched Balthasar. She realised that never again would there be love for her in that heart filled with a love divine. She turned white with rage and gave orders for the caravan to return at once to the land of Sheba.

As soon as the star had ceased to speak, Balthasar and his companions descended from the tower. Then, having prepared a measure of myrrh, they formed a caravan and departed in the direction towards which they were guided by the star. They journeyed a long time through unknown countries, the star always journeying in front of them.

One day, finding themselves in a place where three roads met, they saw two kings advance accompanied by a numerous retinue; one was young and fair of face. He greeted Balthasar and said:

"My name is Gaspar. I am a king, and I bear gold as a gift to the child that is about to be born in Bethlehem of Judea."

The second king advanced in turn. He was an old man, and his white beard covered his breast.

"My name is Melchior," he said, "and I am a king, and I bring frankincense to the holy child who is to teach Truth to mankind."

"I am bound whither you are," said Balthasar. "I have conquered my lust, and for that reason the star has spoken to me."

"I," said Melchior, "have conquered my pride, and that is why I have been called."

"I," said Gaspar, "have conquered my cruelty, and for that reason I go with you."

And the three magis proceeded on their journey together. The star which they had seen in the East preceded them until, arriving above the place where the child lay, it stood still. And seeing the star standing still they rejoiced with a great joy.

And, entering the house they found the child with Mary his mother, and prostrating themselves, they worshipped him. And opening their treasures they offered him gold, frankincense and myrrh, as it is written in the Gospel.

## Three Works by Alice A. Bailey

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# Meditation, Clairvoyance, and Action

Continued from November issue

by Eleanor C. Merry

No. IV.—SUPERSENSIBLE EXPERIENCES AND THE PHYSICAL BODY

**B**EFORE GOING ON TO DESCRIBE the two other "gates" which lead to the liberation of the powers of the soul, it may be well to look at what was described in the last article as the "Gate of Death" from another standpoint. This may help to make such an experience seem more in keeping with normal everyday life.\*

Suppose we have been deeply immersed, over and over again, and perhaps after months or even years of experiment, in some particular thought purposely selected as a subject for meditation—let us say the subject has been *Light*—our thoughts may have taken some such direction as the following :

The light that is filling the surrounding world is itself not visible. All that is visible is the throwing back of light by the objects which are present within its sphere of influence. Even the air. The air is not "light," but the particles in it are perceptible through the presence of light. The air has been called by occultists of an earlier time the "shadow" of light. As we know, a shadow in the ordinary sense is caused because light is there. But we know also that our language gives us another meaning in the word "light" because we use it to express *understanding*. "Light dawns upon me." Or, after a long struggle to grasp some idea, we cry : "Oh, I see !"

Light began in the world as a spiritual manifestation. At first it was not there. "Heaven" and "Earth" were there ; Heaven as an utmost state of spirituality ; Earth "without form and void."† "Let there be Light" was the divine decree before there was any human awareness of the existence of the Earth. Then Light appeared as a penetration into the creative powers of an inner illumination . . . of wisdom. And this shone into the void.

We let our thoughts continue : If, when something is clearly understood we connect it with the idea of inner light, then, in the process of the creation of the world Beings must have been in existence who, when Light began, grasped with their divine intelligence the purpose of the creation. Inwardly, *light* appeared to them. But nothing can exist without its opposite. With the light comes its airy shadow ; "airy," because the light of wisdom reveals the existence of Soul that is aware ; the mingling of light and its shadowy air is the beginning of the life of Soul. The image of the life of the Soul in man is the breath he draws. His understanding is Light.

As our thoughts proceed we can watch their effects upon us. If at any point we feel suddenly and positively "Yes, I see !"—we can notice how it affects our breathing. In the

moment of suspense before the light comes, we draw in the breath—hold it—and in "seeing," joyfully expel it. Our "light" brings with it its airy shadow !

So what the spiritual thinkers of long ago experienced in the light and air, we can still grasp in a small and intimate way today.

But suppose we go further in thinking about light. As the capacity for clear meditation grows, we find we can distinguish between two directions that it takes ; thoughts may take an inner trend (as above) or feel their way out into the outer world. There, light appears to us in another guise. We see it as a kind of communicating medium between all created things and beings. We see everything in Nature, from the silvery or golden or rose-coloured efflorescence of light that streams behind and through the clouds, down to the sparkling of an insect's wing, or the mild light-filled eye of some ruminating beast—as the pictures of an all-pervading element of light, which, being light, draws around itself the life-giving miracle of air.

Air is the consequence of light. It is the "answer" of the creation to the light of the wisdom of the world. This answer "sounds" everywhere. "There is neither speech nor language, but their voices are heard among them." It is the unuttered Word, spiritually linking together all things. It is there. It *rests* in us as the light of thought ; it rests in the universe as the light of wisdom. With physical eyes we cannot see it, but with the "single eye" we begin to apprehend it.

But if such a meditation were to be practised often, but without any other counteracting or complementary exercises, it would lead inevitably to something else. Gradually we should

begin to feel ourselves drawn out into this light and these light-pictures. We should become far more intimately aware of existencies—whether supersensible beings or merely the creatures of the human, animal, plant, and mineral kingdoms—as though we and they were united in this streaming light. But the experience would become more and more "thin," more and more tenuous, more and more "airy." The physical world, as physical world, would become of less and less importance ; our own body would begin to fade from our consciousness.

If we were to grow by such means too fond of this light, we should have perforce to die to the world. We should cease to be able to distinguish ourselves from other beings. We should be poured out over the universe. As human beings we should lose our worth.

It is for this reason that the "gate of death" may not stand alone. It is for this reason that meditation may never be only an exercise of thought, however lofty and vital, but must be sustained by the other two powers of the soul, feeling, and will.



\* The account of the Three Gates has been adapted from unpublished lectures by Dr. Rudolf Steiner.

† First chapter of Genesis.



If the preliminary training for more advanced meditation has been of the right kind, a quite positive result accrues from a sincere grappling with such a subject as the light in which wisdom rests. *It awakens the capacity to extend our memory.*

The extension of memory here meant has actually a certain connection with that often-described experience that comes to people when their physical life is in imminent danger. A memory of their whole past life appears in a single moment. Every detail is there. The life is "seen" in a flash; and as though companioned by what is not seen, but impressed upon the soul: its worth or worthlessness in face of the moral judgment of the spiritual world.

In a somewhat similar way the moment when the mere intellectual quality of thinking reaches the threshold of its own specific habitual clarity—the "gate of death"—and passes over into the higher imaginative "picture-thinking," its worthlessness in face of this new spiritual perception, is apparent. It is then that the picture of one's whole life may glimmer upon the threshold. If the soul is strong enough, this experience can become quite stable, and the memory can gradually extend itself to a point where *pre-natal* memory awakes; and eventually, knowledge of the truth of re-incarnation.

But if in meditation we allow our *self-consciousness* to evaporate we may become mediumistic. If we retain it, we become *more* aware of ourselves and of the operation of our own individual "light." We need to be ourselves points of vantage for the observation of spiritual facts. This retaining of self-consciousness is of the utmost importance. No reliable clairvoyance can ever be gained without the strengthening of that part of our being we call our Ego—our "I"; and only by maintaining spiritual "presence of mind" can meditation be an effective means for the ultimate attainment of that kind of clairvoyance which may be called "exact"; and which is the product of liberated thought, feeling, and will, not burdened by the reflected images of the materiality of the body, nor by the anthropomorphic conceptions of an unsound psyche.

But the "gate of death," in the sense indicated above, when there is no longer any reliance upon any of the merely materialistic products of well-ordered reasoning, and when the moral judgment of the higher self is allied,—as though in stern opposition to the questing soul,—with the light-filled wisdom of the spiritual world—may be, for some, an experience similar to that known to all mystics as the "dark night" of the soul.

Nevertheless, this dark night, if it is to be the precursor of a full dawn, cannot be limited only to one member of the three that form the complete triad of thinking, feeling, and willing.

So the second gate is connected with the second member, the life of feeling.

It may be that there is a certain difference between mysticism and occultism in that the latter in no wise separates mystical experience from what we usually call "reality." The occultist understands the inviolable connections which *link* the spiritual formative powers within the material body and the material universe, with the spiritual body and the spiritual worlds. He never loses sight of them. The mystic on the other hand, tends more to endeavour to loose himself from these connections, striving, in his ecstatic moments, to become un-conscious of himself and wholly "God-conscious." And afterwards, seeks to bring this one-ness into relation with the *multiplicity* of phenomena, both earthly and heavenly, which then seem to oppose it.

To the occultist, the multiplicity of the world itself is his teacher—he finds in it *spiritual* reality, and the laws which hold sway in it lead him to the Divine. The mystic intensifies the life of feeling. The occultist gives equal value to thinking, feeling, and willing.

The approach to the second gate is by way of the emotions, and not, as in the first, by way of the thoughts. The first is connected with the brain and the whole of the nervous system. The second with the pulsations of the heart, the rhythm of breathing, the circulation and movement of the blood.\* Just as at the "gate of death" there is thrown up into the consciousness the image of the winged angelic being that is liberating itself from the pale dead world of the brain, so at the second gate there may be thrown upon the screen of vision the form of a beast of prey.

In ancient tradition and legend this was called the Meeting with the Lion.

In Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parsifal* there is a vivid description of Sir Gawain's encounter with the lion when he comes to the Chatel Merveil, the Castle of Wonders. There he lies upon the "couch marvellous," which has ruby wheels, and is whirled about the hall whose floor is like slippery glass; he is deafened with sounds, dazzled by colours, shot at by arrows, and at last attacked by a ferocious lion. He fails to master the lion, and loses consciousness. The test is whether the soul can find poise and self-possession in the midst of visions that are struggling for liberation from the elemental energies of bodily life.

There is all the difference between Chatel Merveil and the Castle of the Holy Grail; and some writers have confused a similar description in the Welsh *Sant Graal* with the final experience of the Grail Castle itself: "And they beheld a castle on level ground in the middle of a meadow; and round the castle flowed a great river, and inside were spacious halls with windows large and fair. . . . They perceived the castle turning with greater speed than the fastest wind had ever known. And above on the castle they saw archers shooting so vigorously that no armour would protect against one of the discharges they made. Besides this were men blowing horns so vigorously that one might think one felt the ground tremble. And at the gates were lions in iron chains, howling so violently that one might fancy the forest and castle uprooted by them."

This is very different from final achievement, from reaching the stillness of the castle "beyond the elements," with "the abundant well above it; sweeter than white wine the drink in it."

The Gate of the Lion is also called the Gate of the Elements. When the meditative life is ruled almost exclusively by feeling and emotion and ecstasy, and has not been steadied by the right methods of spiritual development, the experience is one of being utterly defeated by the turbulence of the emotions (so that one loses the *higher* consciousness at the very moment when it seems within one's grasp) because they are always bound up with the circulation of the blood, the rhythm of breathing, and the chemical processes connected with them—with the "fire" the "air" and the "water" of the body. The solution—the liberation from their oppression and "attack"—used to be called the *riding* of the Lion.

These bodily processes are things that work in us beneath the threshold of our consciousness to a great extent. If we were

\* Every minute change in the life of feeling—sympathies and antipathies—directly affects these processes, as has often been proved.



always fully aware of them we could not endure it. But right progress in spiritual development inevitably raises them nearer to our conscious life, but so that we may master them, and find their cosmic archetypes.

People may have many visions who are standing at this "gate." They have a different character from the pale, shadowy, and swiftly-fleeting visions that are borne upon the wings of thought. They have beauty and warmth. But their beauty may be wholly deceptive. They represent only one part of the effort of the soul to reach a higher consciousness. And all such visions are, to begin with, no more than reflections. They hold out the promise of something that is still out of reach in its entirety. They cannot be taken as *total*; they are but the scattered letters of a heavenly script. But the heavens "write themselves" into our body. And to begin with, many visions are but masked images of bodily forms and processes.

Our life of feeling is primarily the source of the urge towards higher knowledge and experience. And if we "feel" our way with warmth of enthusiasm, with ardent, yet still vague, aspiration, and without the cool detachment bestowed by the starlight of clear thinking, we also tend to lose ourselves, if our thoughts turn outwards, in what another age described as the elements—but now in the outer world—in the fire, the air, the water, the earth of external Nature.

It is by no means a rare experience to have the sense of losing our own identity in a passionate, mystical submergence of ourselves in the phenomena of the world. In one of Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Plays, the *Portal of Initiation*, the character Johannes reaches this experience; and it may be one of terrible suffering:

. . . "I change  
Each hour of day, and am transformed by night.  
The Earth I follow on its cosmic course:  
I seem to rumble in the thunder's peal,  
And flash along the lightning's fierce-forked tongue—  
I AM!—Alas, already do I feel  
Mine own existence snatched away from me" . . .

Descriptions of this experience which occur in old writings—a fine example is in the poems attributed to the Bard Taliesin (6th century A.D.)—have given rise to quite false interpretations, where they have been regarded as expressions of belief in metempsychosis (transmigration of the soul); whereas they are really expressions of this feeling of being submerged in the living forces of the world.

Taliesin says:

"I have been a drop in the air.  
I have been a shining star.  
I have been a word in a book.  
I have been a book originally.  
I have been a light in a lantern. . . .  
  
I have been a sword in the hand.  
I have been a shield in a fight.  
I have been the string of a harp,  
Enchanted for a year  
In the foam of water.  
I have been a poker in the fire.  
I have been a tree in a covert.  
There is nothing in which I have not been."

Quite another class of such descriptions—where the experience of having dwelt in other circumstances or in other human beings is related *historically*—these are much more genuine references to a belief in re-incarnation; a very different thing.

It is easy to see how the passage through this gate, guarded by the devouring lion, may rob a person of all balance of soul. It brings great ecstasy, as well as pain. But ecstasy, without "feet" to it, is but a poor travesty of the sure and discriminating poise that this gate demands.

The third gate has been given the name of the Gate of the Sun; and this one is "guarded by a Dragon."

Leaving aside the imaginative visionary elements, let us look at it from a more prosaic standpoint.

In ancient times inner illumination had little to do with the forces of thinking—with the head—but very much to do with the lower regions of the body. The "proving of the heart and reins" is an expression that refers to this.

The bodily processes connected with digestion, the generative forces, the inner secretions, and so on, lie far below the threshold of our consciousness; they are comparable, so far as we are concerned to-day, with the state of sleep. Yet once, the greatest visions of mankind were bestowed during sleep, or in deep trances; the concepts, or even the visions of *thought*—mental pictures—as we understand them to-day, were unknown. From the very fundamentals of the life of the body men drew their deepest intuitions. And these were always felt as the "wisdom of the Serpent"—the mighty solar fire that rose from the depths to light up the "heaven" of still unrealised thinking, with majestic pictures.

All higher knowledge must *rise* first from the body. In our own time, the body, regarded as it is as a mere material and even mechanical apparatus, together with all that is physical, has become the dominating factor in our existence. The idea of the body being a Temple of divine wisdom, a spiritual structure, an image of the whole creation—no longer prevails. Nevertheless, this Temple which we call the body is so constructed that it is an exact replica of the universe. It is threefold; and three powers of the soul dwell in it: Thought, Feeling, and Will. Its third gate, the Gate of the Sun, is the gate of spiritual intuition. And this is *selfless love*.

But because the attainment of selfless love—the fruit of the Will—demands the mastery of desire, it brings the most crucial tests and the most radiantly coloured visions. Self-deception is here at its strongest.

A cultivation of the will, in excess of the cultivation of an enhanced thinking and feeling, would bring about an immense spiritual arrogance. In small measure this is seen in many instances where there has been a faulty development of the inner life. In extreme cases it is not difficult to guess whither it could lead. But a balanced life of meditation *and action* has nothing to fear. The Gate of the Sun is the full and perfect complement of the Gate of Death. And between the two burns the fire of an inextinguishable ardour—the love of spiritual freedom.

Every man holds the key, through his meditative life, of each of these gates. If he opens them he gains a new—and threefold—understanding of the world. If he cannot—if he can do no more than contemplate them, fulfilling to the best of his powers what is demanded by their Guardians, the Angel, the Lion, and the Dragon, he has done much.

He will feel that he is a little nearer, not only to those whom



he will then be able to surmise are, or have been in the past, true leaders of men; but also to those countless mythical heroes, who have spoken with mysterious "messengers," have mounted upon the back of lions "holding their heart in their hand," have plunged their bright spear into the fiery throat of the dragon; or have drunk the three precious drops from the Cauldron of Ceridwen. He will understand the meaning of the renunciation of honours; and his heart will burn at Taliesin's cry:

"*Thrice* have I been born! I know how to meditate. Woeful it is that men will not come to seek all the sciences of the world which are treasured in my bosom; for I know all that has been, and all that will be hereafter." And thus he will guess why sorrow is stamped upon the brow of the great Initiates, who know the source of joy, and the way thither, and are eager to impart it out of selfless love.

(To be continued)

#### OUR POINT OF VIEW—(continued from page 4)

*News-Chronicle* for permission to reprint in this issue an article from that newspaper of November 2nd. Rudolf Steiner's teachings as they affect agriculture have been referred to in this journal on numerous occasions, particularly by Frau Kolisko and Mrs. Pearce of the Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation. We offer our congratulations to the *News-Chronicle* on two counts: first, because in this instance it has given further evidence of its traditional sense for what constitutes real news-value, secondly because we believe that the publicity thus given to Captain Wilson's achievement is a contribution towards a vital economic problem which is yearly becoming more acute. The Earth is by no means so rich as it once was; it is a decaying organism, and sooner or later, unless a halt is called to systematic chemical-poisoning of the soil, we shall be faced with a problem which might well be beyond help.

• • •

In addition to the lectures at Steiner Hall, London and Home Country readers will be interested in those given under the auspices of the United Lodge of Theosophists. These lectures will be given on Sunday evenings at 17 Great Cumberland Place, W.1,—near Marble Arch. Each lecture starts at 8 p.m.

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The Editor

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No. 1



# From Darwinism—Whither?

No. I.

by Eugene Kolisko, M.D. (Vienna)

**N**O OTHER CENTURY BUT THE 19TH could have provided the foundation for the life of such a man as Darwin. He was the first to introduce the idea of evolution as proceeding out of Nature herself. As Newton, in the 17th century, had promulgated the theory that gravity—the force of the Earth—was the mechanical force energising the whole inorganic universe, so Darwin extended this theory to include the organic world.

Darwin is the genius of observation. But whence did he obtain his material? Certainly not from his education. As he says himself: "The school, as a means of education to me, was simply a blank." And his father once said to him, in summing up his general attainments: "You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching; and you will be a disgrace to yourself and all your family."

The education which he wanted no school at that time could give him; but he obtained it during what was really the only important event of his rather monotonous life—his journey round the world, from 1831 to 1836. Soon after that was over he settled at Down (in 1842) and remained there without interruption—hardly ever visiting London—for forty years.

The whole Darwinian theory proceeds only from two elements: the one, is his conviction of the immense *variability* of Nature; the second, is the principle of *selection*, through the struggle for existence.

The first arises in his mind from his experiences during his world tour. One need only read his description of this, and see how every variety of species impresses him and how he returns filled with a general sense of admiration for the creative versatility of Nature.

The 18th century demonstrated the supreme principle of *classification*—as given in the Linnean system. One can imagine the soul of Darwin, as a representative of the 19th century, dried up by this rigid systematic spirit of classification, and drinking in all that he observed as versatility and variability in Nature. He became as convinced of this variability in Nature to the same degree as the scientists of the preceding century were convinced that a divine Creator had unalterably classified all the species of the world.

As for the second principle, the struggle for existence, he himself tells us how he came to discover it: "After my return to England it appeared to me that by following the example of Lyell in geology, and by collecting all facts which bore in any way on the variation of animals and plants under domestication, and Nature, some light might perhaps be thrown on the whole

subject. My first note-book was opened in July 1837. I worked on true Baconian principles and, without any theory, collected facts on a wholesale scale. . . ."

" . . . I soon perceived that selection was the key-stone of man's success in making useful races of animals and plants, but how selection could be applied to organisms living in a state of *Nature*, remained for some time a mystery to me. In October 1838—that is 15 months after I had begun my systematic enquiry—I happened to read for amusement [my italics] Malthus on "Population"; and, being well prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence which everywhere goes on, from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants—it at once struck me, that under these circumstances favourable variations would tend to be preserved, and unfavourable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be the formation of new species. Here, then, I had at last got a theory by which to work; but I was so anxious to avoid prejudice, that I determined not for some time to write even the briefest sketch of it. In June 1842 I first allowed myself the satisfaction of writing a very brief abstract of my theory. . . ."

What can we understand by his reference to Malthus? The Malthusian theory is drawn entirely from the observation, not of biology, but of the economic life of the time. *Industrialism* was the force which had created the struggle for existence between human beings; and this was the best moment for observing it. Over-population is the phantom which seemed to alarm Malthus and induces him to put forward his idea of birth-control and limitation.

Darwin, as he himself confesses, could create no theories. *Observation* was his great gift, not *thinking*. He says he was "well-prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence," but he had to take the idea from another, who had got it not from observing Nature, but from observing the economic conditions of the 19th century.

We are now living exactly 100 years since this remarkable moment when, in Darwin's mind, the sub-conscious conviction of an unlimited versatility in *Nature*—obtained during his world-tour—amalgamated with the Malthusian theory drawn from the *economic life*.

The whole plan for the theory of the origin of species was now there. And what Darwin did later was only an elaboration of it, including his production of a series of monographs of incalculable value; but these are based on pure observation, such as for example the papers on *Climbing Plants*, *Earth Worms*, the *Emotions of Men and Animals*, and so on.

How little one may really regard the struggle for existence as an incontrovertible





theory in Nature is shown by the example of the work of the Russian Count Kropotkin (born at Moscow in 1842). This philosopher began also with a world-tour; and from his observations on animal and plant life, he produced his book on *Mutual Assistance*, showing by numerous examples in the animal and plant kingdoms the opposite principle prevailing to that of the struggle for existence.

If we read the *Origin of Species* we are struck by the fact that, in itself, it really does not account for the immense effect it produced on the thought of the time. Darwin himself says in his Autobiography :

"It is no doubt the chief work of my life. It was from the first highly successful. The first small edition of 1,250 copies was sold on the day of publication, and the second edition of 3,000 was sold soon afterwards. Sixteen thousand copies have now (1876) been sold in England : and considering how stiff a book it is, this is a large sale. It has been translated into almost every European tongue."

I think that this success can only be explained by the close connection of Darwin with the leading spirit of the 19th century. It is a remarkable fact that Wallace had published practically the same theory just one year before, and the co-operation of these two scientists—neither of whom wished to take priority over the other—certainly contributed to the astonishing success of the *Origin*. Lyell, the great geologist who introduced the idea of evolution into geology is the third element in the whole picture. Darwin himself says, as previously quoted, that "by following the example of Lyell in geology" . . . "and by working on true Baconian principles" in collecting the facts of variation in Nature, he had come to his final conclusions.

Francis Bacon was the prophet of modern natural science, although he did little or no experimental work ; but he had the genius to foresee the whole trend of scientific development. In any case one must say that this trend was towards materialism, and excluded from science all spiritual content.

In the 19th century a revival takes place through Lyell, Wallace, and Darwin ; and the tremendous success of the *Origin of Species* marks the incarnation of this experimental spirit in biology.

But paradoxically enough, the most outstanding success of the Darwinian theory, was not in England but in Germany. This success depended upon one individual, who although not so well known in England, must be studied if one would really understand the full significance of Darwin.

This individual is Ernst Haeckel. He was born on the 16th February 1834 at Potsdam. He studied natural science and medicine at Würzburg and Berlin under Johannes Müller the great physiologist, who was still under the influence of the German idealistic school of the early 19th century ; also under Virchow the inaugurator of modern pathological anatomy. He soon became distinguished for his enthusiasm and originality in zoological studies. At the zoological research stations of Naples and Messina he had the opportunity of studying the immense variety of ocean fauna. He became professor at Jena in 1861, where he was the head of the Zoological Institute till his death in 1920—a period of 59 years !

His gigantic descriptive work about the lower animals such as infusoria, medusae, corals and so on, is especially remarkable for the copious illustrations expressive of his outstanding

# IN&W

## The Superphysical

*A Review of the Evidence for  
continued existence, reincarnation  
and mystical states of consciousness*

by

ARTHUR W. OSBORN

Foreword by

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artistic talent. He was really a great painter, and the Jena Haeckel Museum still shows thousands of landscapes painted by him during the many journeys which he undertook at different times in his life.

When he first read Darwin's *Origin of Species* it was a remarkable experience for him. He at once became Darwin's best pupil; and in 1866 published his *General Morphology*. This is the standard work, introducing Darwinism and the evolution theory, into the whole field of biology.

Haeckel applies the *Origin of Species* to Man. He studies embryology, and discovers the "fundamental biogenetic law" that the life-history of the individual is a more or less accurate recapitulation of the historic evolution of all species.

His great field of work is *human embryology*. All his extended knowledge and artistic faculties were devoted, at the last, to the investigation of *human* development. But, in approaching this field, he came into conflict with Religion—that is, with the religious traditions of the time. The great struggle of Darwinism against orthodox religious creeds really begins, *not* with Darwin himself, but with Haeckel. Even in 1876 there already existed in Germany a catalogue or bibliography on "Darwinism," appearing every year or two afresh. Haeckel became the champion of Darwinism; and what has been called in Germany the "Kultur-Kampf" is by no means unconnected with Haeckel's discoveries, and no one emphasised so strongly as he the descent of Man from the apes.

The climax of this struggle was reached in 1899 when Haeckel published his book *Welträtsel—Riddles of the World*. It represented the apotheosis of Monism.

In reviewing Haeckel's life it can easily be seen how strong is his connection with the 19th century. He is born in 1834—i.e. at the beginning of the second third of the century. The first third brought to Germany the definite climax of idealistic thought, which tried to unite Art, Science, and Religion into a combined philosophy of Man. Goethe dies in 1832 and so brings this period to an end. Haeckel publishes his first Darwinian work in 1866, and his concluding philosophical and natural scientific work in 1899. It was in 1833 when Haeckel "happened to be an embryo" himself!—1833, 1866, 1899, are the mile-stones of his career.

I must now introduce something that appears quite paradoxical, and which may be believed or not as the reader feels inclined;—but which perhaps may be permitted,—in a journal which combines "Modern Mysticism" and "Modern Natural Science,"—as representing some observations of a modern mystic upon modern science!

When Haeckel was still in the embryonic stage, Darwin was undertaking his world-tour, collecting, from the whole world, material for his later work on evolution. It was certainly most important for Haeckel that his embryonic period coincided with those experiences in Darwin's life which established in the latter's mind his conviction of the variability in Nature. While Darwin is collecting his material for the "Origin of Species" Haeckel is making his "pre-natal experiences" concerning the "Origin of Man" in his own embryonic development. And later, when Haeckel comes into contact with the Darwinian theory he immediately takes it up, applies it to the evolution of *Man*, and develops from it his embryological science.

So these two great protagonists of the evolution theory,

starting from a definite point at the beginning of the second third of the 19th century, gave to this epoch its characteristic feature. They are really "sons" of the 19th century—as evolutionists working out both the origin of species and the origin of Man.

For the Middle-European culture Darwinism means an irruption into it of a foreign element. It is not by chance that the greatest German poet Goethe is at the same time a remarkably fine scientist, and has inaugurated a scientific ideal which, it seems to me, will be realised only during the course of future development. In his *Metamorphosis of Plants*, and in his zoological works, he also possesses the principle of evolution, but in an entirely spiritual form. In his *Theory of Colours*—unfortunately still so little known, or recognised—he fought against the Newtonian colour-theory. This whole stream was cut off by the irruption of the materialistic trend in science. Goethe did *not* omit *Man* in his explanation of the world, and if his work had been able to be continued without interruption it would not have been necessary, a hundred years later, for Alexis Carrel to state that Man is "unknown" for our present science.

The evolution theory need *not* lead into a material *cul de sac*, as it did through Darwinism.

It was in the last third of the 19th century that Steiner, the editor and interpreter, for nearly 20 years, of Goethe's natural-scientific works, while acknowledging the immense importance of Darwin and Haeckel, tries to create a spiritual conception of the evolution of mankind. He takes hold of the broken thread of the Goethian ideal, and applies it to all the theoretical and practical aspects of modern science, which, in the meantime has gathered together innumerable facts which only lack a spiritual interpretation.

Darwin shows all the features of great genius confined to observation, and especially adapted to the 19th century. But it is remarkable how he himself describes the changes he experienced in his later life. Originally, as a young man, he had a keen appreciation of art; he liked poetry—and read much of it—pictures, and music. As a school-boy he delighted in Shakespeare. But in later years he says: "But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry. I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures and music."

He complains then of: "... This curious and lamentable loss of the higher aesthetic tastes." And continues as follows: "My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws, out of large collections of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone, on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive."

There are not many people who make such sincere confessions. They reveal Darwin as a remarkably open-hearted and simple man. A little further on in his autobiography he recognises that there is a certain tragedy in the loss of his aesthetic tastes, and even finds a connection between this and his decreasing belief in God and immortality.

He concludes these remarks with the words: "I cannot pretend to throw the least light on such abstruse problems. The mystery of the beginning of all things is insoluble by us, and I for one must be content to remain an Agnostic."

(To be continued)



## Two Poems

by Clare Cameron

### SCORPIO

Alone and proud he travels, through inertia of Matter.  
Flat to earth, the Serpent's scales glitter in the night.  
Hypnotic is his eye, and raised the fang of potency,  
The unsheathed sword of power of the destroying angel  
Fallen in darkness from the citadels of Light.

Upward coils the spiral of his evolution  
From the stagnant waters to the pathway of return.  
Terrible his travail within the shining armour,  
Wherein the vital forces, his magic and his mastery  
On the secret altar of his dedication burn.

Clean and straight to heaven, when the night is over,  
Rears the wand creative, and from the shell cast down,  
In transmutation from the heart's alembic  
Breaks the mighty Eagle of the consummation,  
Of work and wand the Terminal and Crown.

### SAGITTARIUS

Within these peaceful walls,  
And by the household fire,  
He lingers but a space who never long abides.  
Unwearied through the sunlight and the dark the Archer rides  
To where his Arrow falls  
In the bird of his desire.

The mountain and the plain,  
The city and the foam,  
The democracies of sympathy and justice that embrace  
In brotherhood all creatures of every clime and race,  
The kingdoms of the brain—  
These his hearth and home.

Traveller, teacher, sage,  
Show your trophies then!  
In petal and the shard, the feather and the thought,  
What treasure from the Eternal Land has your Arrow brought  
To enlighten and assuage  
Afflicted, struggling men?

## THE ARYAN PATH

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# A New Cosmology as the Basis of a New World Order

III. THE EAST, THE MIDDLE AND THE WEST by G. S. Francis

**I**N EARLIER ARTICLES AN ATTEMPT has been made to present a view of history in which mankind, in this phase of evolution, passes through a rhythmic sequence of culture epochs or civilisations each of which has a life cycle extending over many centuries. History, however, does not repeat itself for, although there are some points of resemblance, each of these successive civilisations has a particular function to perform and to that extent each is unique. The civilisation of Babylon and Egypt was quite different from that of Greece and Rome and this different again from the modern civilisation of Western Europe and America. Each of these civilisations does, however, pass through a succession of phases of which the following picture of social evolution in Europe will serve as an illustration.

## *Social Evolution in Europe*

After the collapse of the Roman civilisation in the fifth century, human life relapsed into a more primitive, local and rural form. The people lived for the most part by hunting and fighting, collected together into tribes under the personal rule of local chieftains. At this period there is no art and consequently no culture, no notion of Nation or State and consequently no politics—*The age of Tribalism*.

After some centuries, however, human consciousness once more expands and culture begins to dawn. Under the fostering influence of a dominant Church, thought becomes philosophical. Decoration and architecture arise as expressions of artistic feeling while religious feeling expresses itself in chivalric ideals. In this age power belongs to the land and the great feudal landlords form the ruling class. Small towns arise here and there but as yet they merely exist for the convenience of the countryside as markets or strongholds—*The age of Feudalism*.

With the decline of Feudalism in the fifteenth century, the present age begins and new human impulses seek expression. It is a period of rapid expansion. Cities increase in size and importance. Explorers set out on voyage after voyage to explore the unknown parts of the Earth until eventually the whole world becomes known. Scientific intelligence develops with its strong respect for reason but diminished religious faith. Art rises to a climax under the hands of gifted individuals, while, as an expression of kingly power, the concept of the National State appears. Commercial cities acquire political dominance over the feudal countryside, money power wrests control from land power, and commercial policy begins to permeate political policy—*The age of Trade and Commerce*.

Then, under the impact of scientific thought social activity is crystalised into industrial forms, engineers learn how to harness powers of the earth like steam, oil and electricity, while inventive minds construct machines to use them. Cities expand

into mammoth proportions and live as parasites upon the decaying body of the countryside. National States expand into vast political aggregations as imperial or colonial empires. Spiritual creativeness declines and intellectual materialism increases while the irreligious tendencies of the age express themselves in a worship of material prosperity. The quality of literature declines and public reading is diverted more and more to sensational fiction or tabloid snippets of senseless news. Imperial ideas obsess political policy to the exclusion of social and human needs, political fear leads to exaggerated desires for "security" and monstrous armaments for defence, while organised finance steadily secures domination over political and economic activity—*The age of Industry and Finance*.

Thereafter various forms of dictatorship arise signifying the victory of "force politics" over "money politics," while a progressive degradation of all political forms sets in. From this point the nations begin to decline into formless masses of people having little or no inner initiative or will. At last the growing weakness of the peoples infects the very centres of power themselves and, with progressive enfeeblement and cumulative violence of administrative leadership, civilisation collapses.

## *What must we do?*

There can be little doubt that the above account represents the tendency of the moment, size rather than quality is the prevailing craze, fear rather than courage is the prevailing note, but this is not the only possible course. It is not difficult for any competent observer to detect, in current affairs, the signs of decline. But is downfall inevitable? To some extent, yes, for matter eternally decays just as life eternally creates. If our consciousness is so closely entangled in materialism that we can only see the process of decay, then we must face decline, but if we could learn how to link our conscious will to the creative forces of life, then we should be able to perceive evidences of ascent within the phenomena of decline, we should be able to see the nature of the new social order that is struggling to birth just as we see the growing plant bursting through the shell of the decaying seed, or the future fruit emerging from the heart of the dying flower. All outward forms are first prepared in the human soul by thought and, just as there are forces of death in all of us as well as forces of life, external circumstances take their apparent shape from the nature of those inner forces of life or death to which our thought adheres. Human beings need not acquiesce in this material downfall, but if they wish to avoid being dragged down with it, they will have to discover in a spiritual science new sources of enlightenment and strength as a counterbalance to the destructive tendencies of material science.

## *The Destructive Forces and their Constructive Counterparts*

So far as the outer forms of modern civilisation are concerned there are three main destructive tendencies at work.



The first is materialistic science which, although it has provided us with a marvellous technique, has nevertheless deprived the people of this civilisation of a living, all-embracing cosmology, without which no one can feel secure or strong.

The second is the lack of a true impulse for freedom. We talk much about freedom, we offer it plenty of lip service, but the fact remains that we fail to organise our civilisation so as to provide genuine freedom for more than a favoured few. We have accepted a view of the world as a piece of purposeless mechanism to the laws of which we feel bound, so we either sink into religious apathy or economic fatalism and just let things drift, or we embrace a modern form of political fatalism which actively and positively opposes human freedom.

The third is our incapacity to develop a new cosmology fired by religious zeal and purpose, therefore we have no true altruism. Modern material civilisation encourages and rewards personal egoism but altruism requires a spiritual view of life. As soon as a man realises that he is a member of an eternal spiritual world he begins to have less fear for himself and learns to care more for the welfare of the whole. Because this civilisation is mainly run by egoistic, anti-social impulses it can make no further economic advance or social progress, but the cause lies not in the system but in ourselves, for there is no such thing as a social or anti-social system except as the organised expression of social or anti-social persons.

What can we do to overcome these tendencies of decline?

- (1) We must, by some means or other, acquire a cosmology that embraces the world, the human race and the Universe in one comprehensive whole, as the basis of our *cultural life*.
- (2) We must learn how to develop impulses for beauty and freedom that can be active in our *social life*.
- (3) We must learn how to evolve religious impulses of brotherhood and unselfishness that can provide a human basis for our *economic life*.

But where are we to look for the source of a new and universal cosmology? Where can a feeling for art and freedom most naturally develop? Where can impulses for brotherhood be most easily found?

The faculties for grasping and understanding a cosmology are most prevalent among the peoples of the West. The peoples of England and America possess a natural genius for understanding and using the forces and materials of the earth and they have evolved an elaborate technique for this purpose. Their world wide systems of trade and their widely extended colonies indicate their talent for seeing things on a world wide scale, in other words a talent for perceiving and shaping a cosmology. But they lack the spirit of altruism and are thus unable to put their high degree of technical skill at the disposal of the higher purposes of human life. This lack of altruism of the West makes an unpleasant impression upon the peoples of the East. The Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore, writes: "The nationalism of the West is not based on social co-operation but upon the spirit of war and conquest. It has developed a power organism to the fullest extent, but it has no spiritual idealism. Its spirit is that of a beast of prey intent upon its booty."

The peoples of the mid-European nations possess artistic faculties and a social technique that enable them to construct

social systems in great variety. This area of the earth is the home of mystics, philosophers, and musicians. They possess a talent for philosophy and art, they possess an instinct for freedom combined with a love of social order, but they lack the requisite temperament for solving social questions.

The Eastern peoples, the people of Asia, possess an inner instinct for brotherhood and a long inherited tradition of spiritual altruism, but they lack the technical ability to construct social systems that would enable their native altruism to find natural expression. This quality of eastern altruism has been well expressed in the following extract from a poem by Shamal Blatt:

"For a bowl of water give a goodly meal,  
For a kindly greeting give reverence with zeal,  
For a simple penny pay thou back with gold,  
If thy life be rescued do not life withhold."

We begin to approach a solution of social problems when we learn how the three impulses necessary for social salvation are distributed among the peoples of the world. It is not enough to sit in studies evolving plans and programmes, we have to get out into the world to find and use the faculties and impulses that are already there. This present civilisation is doomed unless the various peoples of the earth can be brought to see that the human qualities necessary to construct and operate an effective social order are not possessed by any one nation but are shared out among the different peoples of the world, therefore, the real task of this age is to find out how to bring representative groups of the different peoples together in an attempt to solve collectively those human and social problems that none of them can solve alone.

That is one way, another would be for the clever but egoistic people of the West to make an effort to acquire some of the spiritual qualities of the East. If the peoples of the West could add the eastern instinct for altruism to their own special talent of scientific technique and then apply this combination to the solution of current problems, we should soon be making headway. The peoples of the West have a thorough knowledge of the materials and forces of the earth and have invented a marvellous technique for using them. The peoples of the East have an outlook that enables them to recognise themselves as part of the life of the entire universe. They feel the presence and guidance of spiritual powers and, despite their present decadence, they have a point of view that prevents them feeling like lost sheep in the universe. As Eduard Schuré says in his "Sanctuaires de l'Orient":

"It cannot be denied that the peoples of the East bear on their foreheads the mark of the finger of God, for, beneath their superstition and depravity, they possess the cult of that divine world for which we sorrowfully yearn. With ardent fervour they revere the holy places and the sacred symbols. Without comprehension they seek in darkness, through their prayers and dreams, for that supreme harmony whose prophetic presence sleeps within the ancient sanctuaries. It is as though a light pervades them, those child-like souls who just believe and wait."

"How different they are to the peoples of our feverish over-stimulated civilisation, with their immaculate factories and murderous cannon, their metal ships and powerful locomotives in which water and fire, those natural enemies, work noisily together beneath man's hand. It is true this



western race of Japhet carries in its hand the blazing torch of Prometheus, the flaming sign of Lucifer defying the universe and even God himself. But this race of Japhet also bears upon its face the shadow of the sign of Satan who represents the arrogance of the 'great denier,' who no longer knows how to love because he has ceased to believe, who no longer believes because he has ceased to perceive the divine with the eyes of the soul. This modern Lucifer, surrounded by the subordinated powers of matter, is despoiled of his heavenly powers of soul by the material weight of his own discoveries.

"Souls of the East and Souls of the West, who reflect two poles of truth, when will you learn to understand each other. The West proclaims 'Your faith is dead, you are nought but dust, the future belongs to me.' The East replies 'Your science is accursed, it leads to death while I have peace in the eternal.'

"One thing is certain, modern science which is not illumined by powers of soul and spirit will be socially sterile. Despite its knowledge and its power it is unable to console a human being in distress or to build a happy human community. Human society can only be transferred by a trinity of Science, Art and Religion fused together and transformed into life itself."

In order to solve the social questions of to-day we need a union of the scientific and technical abilities of Anglo-America, the artistic and cultural abilities of Europe and the religious impulses of Asia, but because our thinking does not get close enough to reality we are still unconscious of the need to encourage the willing co-operation of the peoples all over the world. If we could only perceive the nature and location of these divided human powers with a clarified consciousness capable of embracing the universe as a whole, we should then have insight and power to help the new civilisation which is trying to emerge from the ruins of the old. We, of the West, look out upon the universe but we see only its mathematical order without comprehending that this is but the outer garment of those spiritual beings who regulate the movements of the spheres. The peoples of Europe, diverted by political mirage into campaigns of separation and strife, fail to perceive the necessity of extending the area and effectiveness of human freedom. The peoples of the East look to the West and see nothing but machinery and arms. But the Asiatic has no taste for machinery, his interest lies in things of the soul.

By some means or other these three diverse temperaments must be brought together in some mutually beneficial activity. It may be some time yet before we fully understand each other's creeds so we must practice *toleration* in Religion. The nations will still be different for they have different missions to perform, but to avoid injustice we should aim at *equal Political Rights* for them all. The one field upon which the peoples of all nations and creeds could join in developing world fellowship as an active practice in life is in organising the production, transport and distribution of food, raw materials, finished products and the practical necessities of physical life, in other words the establishment of a *World-Wide Economic Commonwealth*.

People may continue to differ about religious creed and political forms of government, but no one doubts that cold and hungry persons need food, clothing, shelter and fuel. We must learn to be tolerant of political and religious differences and to

concentrate attention upon the one task upon which all human beings could work together for their mutual benefit. This task is world co-operation in economic activity, the work of satisfying the simple physical needs of mankind about which no one disputes. This must be made the common work of everyday life in a true world brotherhood. The Earth we live upon provides enough of everything for all, it is the business of the peoples of the Earth to organise that plenty so as to avoid the pangs of poverty and want, and in this new world task, the planning of a world economy, the technical faculties of the Western peoples, the artistic faculties of the European peoples, and the religious impulses of the Eastern peoples will be all required.

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#### THE RIDDLE OF SWEDENBORG—(continued from page 22)

way peculiar to him, to perceive the many details of a spiritual world.

This article is intended only to give a certain part of Swedenborg's whole horoscope, namely that which bears upon the peculiar dual aspect of his character.

• • •

## King Leopold

The speech made by H.M. King Leopold of the Belgians at the Guildhall, London, on November 17th was full of deep significance, the true import of which it is hoped will be understood, not only by those whose business and duty it is to understand it, but by every thinking man and woman. As long as our eyes are bandaged by the colours of party loyalties, whether they be conservative or communist, fascist or liberal, we advertise our total inability to appreciate the root cause of the world's economic distress. His Majesty said:

"It follows, does it not, that Great Britain has special responsibilities in regard to world affairs, more particularly in economic matters which lie at the root of the international problems which beset the world. . . . Political objectives are of concern only to certain sections of mankind, but the better ordering of economic life is of interest to mankind as a whole.

"What we are faced with, therefore, is a world problem which, in its turn, is complicated by various national problems.

"In order to solve these difficulties we should need to get a clear view of economic realities seen with a dispassionate eye and divorced from every other consideration."

"It is permissible to be hopeful that Great Britain may play a prominent part in the search for a solution of the major economic difficulties."

We believe that these "economic" matters are easily tabulated, and that a remedy can be found. THE MODERN MYSTIC is not, indeed cannot be, interested in party politics. But it is interested in the Earth and its products. A criminal mis-use of both is at the root of all our ills, and if this civilisation is to survive, the remedy must be applied before it is too late. We hope to publish a series of articles showing *how to find* the solution to this question. King Leopold's is probably, for us, the most important voice in Europe to-day.



# Derelict Land made to produce £600 an Acre\*

## Modern Farming by Ancient Wisdom

**M**ODERN SCIENCE HAS BEEN married to the ancient wisdom at this little Lincolnshire village (Surfleet) near Spalding to convert a derelict farm into one of the most fertile spots in Britain.

It has been done by Captain R. G. M. Wilson, who began his career in the Royal Engineers, went into business in the City for two years, eschewed that life and took on this farm in 1932.

When he began the heart had been farmed out of the Surfleet land, covering 325 acres, and only four hands were finding permanent employment upon it.

Now it shows a rich, fine tilth, parts of it are yielding horticultural produce worth £600 an acre and 70 persons are permanently employed on it.

### A USE FOR WEEDS

How did he do it? First of all he started restoring fertility by the orthodox method of livestock and the plough.

But now that the land is in better heart he is depending more and more upon using compost of rotted green stuff, such as cabbage stalks and leaves, grass, potato haulms, even the less fibrous weeds.

He hopes to dispense with all artificial manures in time, and for the last two years no artificials at all have been used on the horticultural part of the farm, known as the "Iceni Nurseries."

In this he is a follower of and believer in Dr. Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian mystic who died soon after the war and left behind his teachings on many things, including agriculture.

*Steiner's agricultural teachings were based on the common-sense view that since the earth is a living thing (or how else could it produce life?) it needs living organisms to maintain its fertility.*

Chemicals are dead things, and although for a time they will produce striking results, eventually they will bring about unbalanced conditions of the soil and rob the things it grows of their beneficial qualities.

### RESTORING THE ELEMENTS

Steiner warned us that the first signs of this would be an increase in animal diseases, which, of course, is happening, and that eventually we who feed directly or indirectly on the earth's produce would suffer in like manner.

He taught that the right way to restore the elements to the soil was through compost from decayed vegetable matter. That is, by organic instead of by inorganic manuring.

Captain Wilson is using these compost heaps, but up to the present has done more with the "Indore" method.

This was rediscovered by Sir Albert Howard in Central India, when he was director of the Institute of Plant Industry at Indore.

For long he could not think why the natives got better results than he, with all his scientific equipment.

Enlightenment came when he realised the basic difference between their methods and his. They could not afford "artificials," so put back as compost all unwanted vegetation that came from the land, consciously fulfilling a natural law.

### READY IN 12 WEEKS

By this method, used at Surfleet, weeds, cabbage leaves and stalks, any kind of living "rubbish," are mixed with horse or cow manure in pits and turned every three weeks. The compost is made and ready for use in 12 weeks. Tremendous heat is generated in the pits—up to 160 deg. C.—which reduces everything to a fine texture.

Surfleet itself is the best test of the efficacy of these methods.

*It would be difficult to imagine market garden crops that look healthier or with a better bloom on them. The flowers are of truer colours and last longer after they are cut; the vegetables have a richer flavour.*

Those accustomed to eating vegetables grown in this way not only say they taste different from other vegetables, but even that they themselves do not feel so well if they have to live for a week or so on the vegetables one normally gets.

### NINE ENTRIES—SEVEN FIRSTS

At the show of spring vegetables in London this year the produce from the Iceni nurseries was in competition with that grown by the greatest experts in the country, but the nine entries took seven first prizes.

But these manuring methods, which are really centuries old, would not alone have made the farm the financial success it is unless modern methods were linked with them.

Motor power, of course, is used wherever possible for cultivation, a light railway runs round the market gardens, the latest breeds of lettuce, etc., that science has perfected are used.

The extra fertility in the land is being used to make it crop to the utmost, with one crop following another in quick succession. The farm maintains two shops in London.

I was struck, too, by the friendly spirit of the place.

The farm has its own social club, where employer and employed meet freely and naturally in the evenings over a glass of beer, and the staff boast a darts team that has only once been defeated in Lincolnshire.

No wonder labour presents no difficulties on this farm, where all seem members of a large, happy family.

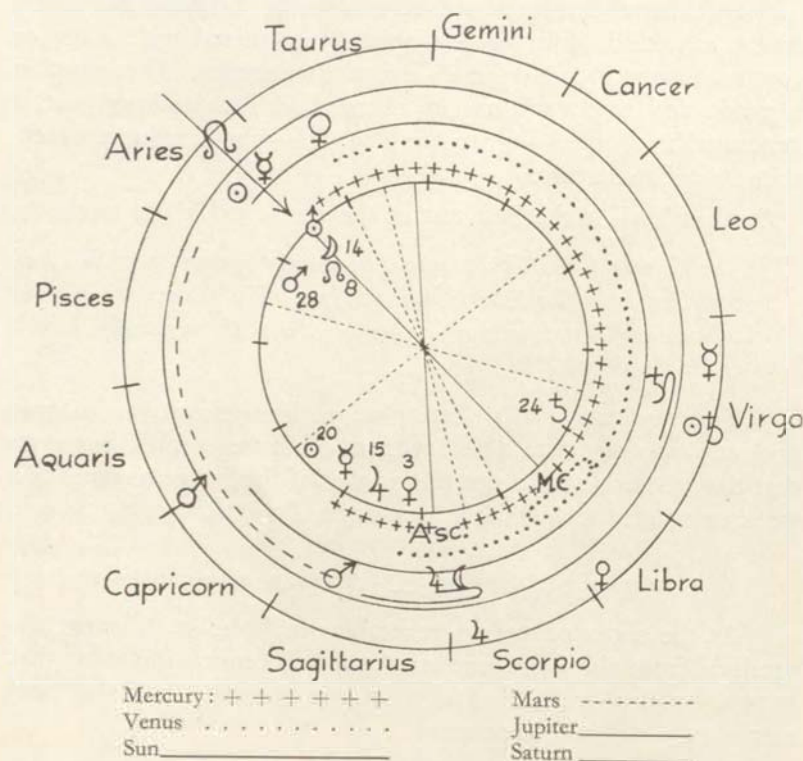
\* We extend to the Editor of the *News Chronicle* our thanks for permission to re-print this article which first appeared in the *News Chronicle* for Tuesday, November 2nd, 1937.



# The Riddle of Swedenborg

by John Seeker

**D**EEP RIDDLES ARISE FOR US when we try to understand the life of Swedenborg. Here is an individuality who up to a certain point in his life exhibited outstanding capacities in natural science and technics; the scientific world is occupied even today with the outcome of some of his work. Then, to all appearances with absolute suddenness, there came a great change over his soul. He became a "theologian," he told of his experiences of a supersensible world and grew to be for many people the founder of a new religious outlook. For this reason it will be interesting to try to gain an understanding of his life and character, as mirrored in the constellations in the Heavens.



SWEDENBORG.  
 Birth: 29th January 1688 (Julian Calendar)  
 The horoscope of birth is given in the inner circle.  
 Beginning of the pre-natal epoch: 20th April 1687  
 (Pre-natal constellations indicated between the middle and inner circles.)  
 Constellation of cosmic philosophy: 27th September 1687  
 (Indicated immediately within the outermost circle.)

Swedenborg was born in Stockholm on the 29th January, 1688 (Julian calendar). At the University of Upsala he studied Philosophy, Philology, Mathematics and Natural Science, which shews what a versatile and universal man he was. From journeys he made in England, Holland, France and Germany in the years 1710-14, he learnt to know much about the world. In 1716 he became Assessor of the Royal Board of Mining in Stockholm and in the following years accomplished a very great deal in technical and engineering matters. During the siege of a Swedish town in the year 1718 he achieved his well-known feat of engineering, when he transported a number of ships across land for the distance of about fourteen English miles. Especially in Natural

Science, however, he was a shining light of his time, and even today societies of Swedish professors are editing the prolific scientific writings which originated in this period of his life.

Then, about the year 1745, he brought out a work, *De cultu et amore Dei*, which already indicated that he was departing from the purely scientific sphere. And it is to this time that one of his "illuminations" is referred. He saw with spiritual sight into a supersensible world. In a wealth of theological writings he told of his supersensible experiences and his followers founded something like a new Christian church, built on the Seer's writings and revelations.

Swedenborg died in London at the age of 82, after having completed his best and most comprehensive work and having foretold the day of his death some weeks beforehand.

It is particularly interesting to see how this "break" in Swedenborg's life is mirrored in his pre-natal horoscope. It is in this horoscope, as we have seen, that the etheric organisation is reflected, and these events of Swedenborg's life must in some way be pictured in it. The year already mentioned as the year of Swedenborg's "illumination"—1743—was the 55th year of his life. Therefore we must refer to the end of the 8th moon-spiral, reckoning from the beginning of the pre-natal horoscope on the 20th April, 1687 according to the Julian calendar ( $8 \times 7 = 56$ ). At this time an exact conjunction took place between Jupiter and Mercury in the constellation of Sagittarius— $1^\circ 4'$ ; Mars was in Aquarius and the Sun in Scorpio, while Venus was retrogressive in Libra,—about  $12^\circ \text{M}$ .

The position of Venus is particularly important. She was retrogressive, and—as may be seen from the diagram—the loop of retrogression was before the Sun in the constellation of Libra. It is with this fact that the "break" in Swedenborg's life, culminating in the "illumination" of the year 1743, is especially connected. We are led to the same conclusion when we regard the horoscope from a more physiological aspect. Here, where we have to consider above all a cardinal situation in the man's life, the retrogression of Venus in *Libra* affords a highly penetrative picture. It is as though the spiritual essence of *Libra* were to speak directly through the Venus sphere; an element of decision is here at work. Something like the two scales of balance seem to be living in this picture, in which Swedenborg's dual nature—even like a Janus head—comes to expression. On one side of the scales there rests the cosmic destiny of Venus inasmuch as she has journeyed, since the beginning of the pre-natal epoch, from the constellation of Taurus. On the other scale is Venus as she journeys on towards Sagittarius, where she arrives at the time of birth. Venus coming from Taurus gives us a picture of the rationalistic, scientific and practical man, while Venus passing into Sagittarius portrays the soul so strongly oriented towards religion,—the striving soul, rising to a knowledge of the Spirit. The fulcrum lies in the constellation of *Libra*, and here indeed Venus passes through her zero-point,—through a kind of nothingness, an empty void, into which then the other side of Swedenborg's own being—the "Theosophist"—enters



with sudden power. For in effect the influence of Venus, being retrogressive, is at this moment damped and weakened.

But there is another aspect of the question. If we look at the horoscope of birth (inner circle of the diagram) we notice at once the position of the Moon. It is in conjunction with Uranus and also near to the Lunar node and to Mars. Here there must be a key to certain secrets. And in effect, if we go back to the moment when the Lunar node was where the Moon is at birth, we find something most remarkable. As indicated in the article on "The Gateway of the Moon," it is the so-called "constellation of the cosmic philosophy" which we encounter on going back to this point of time. This constellation, from a certain point of view, gives us a picture of the astral body. The date of it is the 27th September, 1687. Thus it occurs, for Swedenborg, during the period of the pre-natal horoscope, namely about the end of the 6th pre-natal Lunar spiral. This, then, should be connected with the 42nd year of his life. Admittedly, that is some time before the events described, which reached their climax in the 55th year, but we may easily imagine that the change which was to come about was already being prepared in this 42nd year in the depths of Swedenborg's soul.

Be that as it may, the "constellation of cosmic philosophy" which appears at this moment, is most enlightening (outer circle in the diagram). Mars is just passing from Capricorn to Aquarius and at the same time a conjunction is taking place in Virgo between the Sun and Saturn.

Voluntarism (Mars) is passing over from Spiritualism into Pneumatism. This points to a spiritually minded philosophy of life which is able to look towards an active world of spiritual Hierarchies—a world of Heavenly angelic Beings.

Connected with this constellation is the conjunction of Sun and Saturn in Virgo. Here Phenomenalism is indicated, in connection with the Gnostic element of Saturn. Swedenborg's spiritual world-conception is nothing abstract or "in the air." It is founded on a real knowledge of supersensible phenomena, although here too, certain inner difficulties are indicated in connection with the passing of the Sun before Saturn. Swedenborg recognises the reality of the supersensible, but has difficulty in breaking through to it owing to a certain peculiarity of his own being. This is the secret indicated in the conjunction of Moon with Uranus at birth, which in itself points very decidedly towards Occultism.

Looking still deeper, we find in the contrast between the Sun-Saturn conjunction and the position of Mars in Capricorn-Aquarius a deeper reason for the apparent duality of Swedenborg's character. Between the two constellations there is a trigonal aspect. In the "spiritual horoscope" the working of the aspects is reversed, and so a trigonal aspect creates difficulties. In the Sun-Saturn position in Virgo we see expressed the natural scientist (Gnosis in Phenomenalism), also the technical and mathematical empiricist (Sun = Empiricism), while in the Mars-position we have the Swedenborg of later years, turning towards the Spirit. Swedenborg was not yet able outwardly to unite Natural Science and Spiritual Science. The "break" came in between these two. Yet inwardly the two points of view supported one another all the same, for through his love of Nature, filled as it was with knowledge, Swedenborg planted the seed in his soul for those powers by which he was then enabled, in the

(continued in page 20)

## BOOKS BY Eleanor C. Merry

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This book traces the mystical development of ancient Celtic Mythology, showing it to be deeply connected with the foundations of Christianity. The Author points out how the gradual metamorphoses of the pre-Christian Mysteries of the West may be traced in their effects even in the world-problems of our own time. The book abounds in legend and folklore, and makes delightful reading.

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# Christmas

by Walter J. Stein, Ph.D.

**C**HRISTMAS, EASTER, ST. JOHN'S DAY and Michaelmas are the four great festivals given to us by the year in rhythmic sequence in order that they may be truly experienced in our life of soul. It means much to approach this spiritual and natural rhythm of the yearly festivals with feeling and with perception, for the soul's ascent to higher and higher grades of spirituality is achieved through four stages of which the festivals are tokens. Hence it is that from olden times a humanity mindful of the Spirit has let the holy year begin with Christmas and has grouped the seasons around the dates of the festivals. The secular year begins with New Year's Eve; the Church's year with Christmas; Nature's year with Easter. This last is obvious when we perceive that vegetation itself is conditioned by the date at which Easter falls. In years when Easter falls early, there is an early season of vegetation; a late Easter denotes lateness in growth.

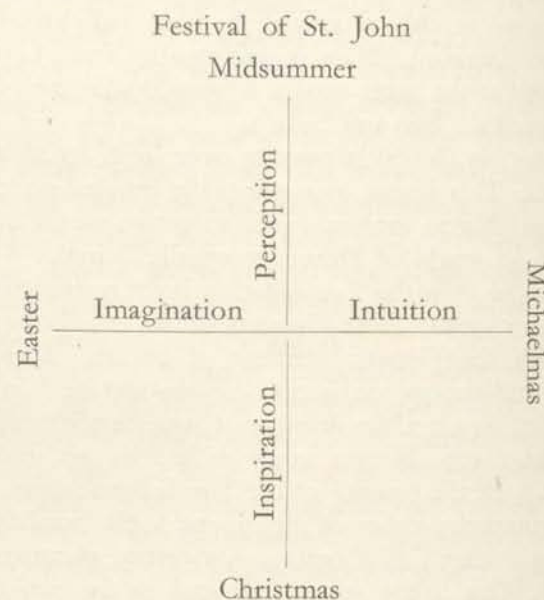
The soul's year, however, begins with Christmas. At this festival we celebrate the birth of the new, childlike impulse of the year—an impulse which sinks into our innermost being as a deep and holy inspiration, but not yet as a force that has actually seized our life of *will*. Nothing less than the cycle of the *whole* year can bring to fulfilment the Inspiration bestowed at Christmas. This is the knowledge underlying the tradition that in the spiritual world during the Thirteen Holy Nights between December 25th and January 6th, there is a prefigurement of all that is to take shape during the twelve months of the year. Christmas stands like a microcosm in time within the macrocosm of the whole year. And indeed the very nature of Inspiration is that in the stillness of inward concentration the universe in its infinitudes of time and space is either reflected or prefigured in the soul. Christmas is a festival of *Inspiration*.

Easter, again, is quite different. At Easter our eyes are directed to the budding and sprouting of Nature, to growth and the unfolding of plant-life, while spiritually we behold the World-Spirit dying into Nature. In the innermost depths of being we live through His entombment and know that His power underlies the resurrection of Nature which has now passed through death and is emerging into new life. How the life of Nature comes to its end and how the Spirit is victorious over the death inherent in all life in so far as it is merely the life of *Nature*—this is what stands before us in the Easter festival. We behold it in great Imaginations in which the Earth and Heavens are united and in which the World-process is seen to embrace and include the fashioning and moulding of the Earth. Easter is a festival of *Imagination*.

The festival of St. John (Midsummer) leads us right out into the world of Nature as presented to the senses. This festival brings home to us all that the senses have to tell of the world in its *manifestation*, when our being is given up to it entirely. St. John's Day, falling at the time of the highest unfoldment of all that Nature places before our faculty of external vision, is a festival of *Perception*.

Michaelmas is the festival of *Resolve*. All that is to be fulfilled and made actual in the course of the year through our will and initiative—this we *resolve* in the sacramental act of the Michael festival. Michael is the Spirit of true initiative. When the individual human being grasps in inward comprehension the task that is specifically his and must be fulfilled by himself alone, when by the grace of Intuition he receives the thought he must make into his own, individual deed—this is a true celebration by the soul of the festival of Michael. Among ancient peoples it was the custom to ratify new undertakings at this season. And in earlier epochs too, it was at this time that the farmer recruited his labourers. It is the season when man seeks for those who will help him in his deeds. Michaelmas is a festival of *Intuition*.

Christmas is a festival of Inspiration and as such we will consider it.



Christmas, the festival in honour of the bearer of the Christ Impulse, celebrated on the 25th December with the preliminary celebration on the 24th, is not so ancient as people are wont to believe. It was celebrated for the first time in Rome, in the year 354 of our era. Earlier festivals were in celebration of the Manifestation of Christ—on the 6th January. It is in a list of days of commemoration in the Church compiled by Filocalus that the date of the Christmas festival is given for the first time as the 25th December. A document emanating from the year 352 still gives the 6th January as the date of the festival of the birth of Christ.\* The change from the one date to the other is full of significance, for the 6th January is the date of the feast of Epiphany, of the Baptism by John, when the Spirit of God hovers over the waters of Jordan and the World-Spirit is made manifest in earthly Man. It is the birth of the Christ in the Man Jesus. The festival on the 25th December is the celebration of the birth of the earthly vessel

\* See *Das Weihnachtsfest*. Hermann Usener. Bonn, 1911; also *Der Weihnachtsbaum*, Camillo Schneider, 1929.



of the Christ Impulse. In the fourth century of our era, therefore, there is not only a change in the date but also in the object of the festival.

What had happened to account for such a change in the festival as celebrated in the year 354 A.D.? This one example is an indication that no single Christmas festival is exactly like another. Humanity is involved in a continuous process of evolution and if we reckon with the factor of this onflowing course of evolution, it may truly be said that each year has its own, unique Christmas festival. What was the cause of the sudden change in the celebration during the fourth century of the Christian era?

Many documents and records prove that the midnight hour of the 25th December was a time of solemn celebration in the ancient Mysteries. I need only here mention Reitzenstein's most interesting researches into this subject. The festival solemnised in the Mysteries of Serapis on the 25th December was, as he shows, in celebration of the birth of the Child begotten of a Virgin. In the writings of Julian the Apostate too, we find that wonderful discourse on the Sun God whose anniversary was celebrated during the holy night of the 25th December.\*

"It is my opinion that the present subject interests all: whatever breathes and moves upon the earth and is endowed with existence, with a rational soul, and with a mind" (*i.e.* body, soul and spirit). "But above all it interests myself, inasmuch as I am a votary of the Sun. Of which fact I possess the most certain evidences in my own case. One instance which it is allowable to adduce is the following:—From my earliest infancy I was possessed with a strange longing for the solar rays so that when, as a boy, I cast my eyes upon the ethereal splendour, my soul felt seized and carried up out of itself." Thus does Julian speak of the Sun God. He says further: "Well is it for that man who, from the third generation backwards has been dedicated to the service of this God. . . . Come, then, and let us celebrate in the best way we can the anniversary festival. . . ." (*Natale Solis Invicti*, December 25th.)

Julian proclaims the Threefold Sun:

- (1) as the Good,
- (2) As Ruler over the Hierarchies,
- (3) As the visible disc of the Sun whose forces in the darkest night of the 25th December must be renewed and led to their resurrection.

Julian the Apostate is here giving expression to ancient tradition preserved through the centuries (of the pre-Christian era too) in the form of a ceremony in the Mysteries.

\* This translation of Julian's hymn *Upon the Sovereign Sun* is by C. W. King, M.A. (Bohn's Classical Library).

But in the year 354 A.D. the Church transfers the birth of the Child to this day and hour. John of Chrysostom who has insight into these connections says: "In the sense of allegory, this holy day of the Lord's Birth is known as the day of the Sun's birth and harmony is thus established between the conception of the ancient Mysteries and that of Christianity." And St. Augustine writes: "Christianity did not first arise at the time when Our Lord walked the Earth, but is much more ancient than this. For antiquity knew and venerated the Christ even if under a different name and with different conceptions." And of the Christmas festival he says: "We celebrate Christmas, the 25th December, not as do the heathen, in commemoration of the birth of the Sun, but in commemoration of Him by whom the sun was created."

The fourth century of our era is marked by a radical change of outlook in every direction. Before that time, indeed, the celebrations were connected more with the death-day known as *Natalia* in the festivals for the Martyrs. For when the human being dies on the Earth he is born into the Spirit.\*

To celebrate the Birth, therefore, was something entirely new but none the less in line with very ancient customs of the Mysteries. It was felt that by reason of its own evolution, the march of time was demanding that the hidden Mysteries should become open festivals. It is in this sense that the following words from a sermon of John of Chrysostom are to be understood.†

"We are approaching a festival worthy of the greatest reverence and holiest awe and of which there can be no better description than that it is the *mother of all festivals*. This festival is to celebrate the birth of the body of Christ. From this the festivals of the Divine Manifestation (Epiphany, on 6th January), Easter, Ascension and Pentecost" (*i.e.* all the festivals of the Church's year) "have received both motive and substance. For if Christ had not been born in a body He would not have been baptised: this is Epiphany—the Manifestation of Christ; He would not have been crucified: this is Easter; nor would He have sent down the Holy Spirit: this is Pentecost. From Christmas, therefore, these festivals all proceed, like rivers flowing in different directions from a single spring. It is not in this respect alone that the day has a right to be adjudged the highest rank, but also because the event it celebrates arouses more holy awe than any other happening. For

having been made Man, it was but natural that Christ should suffer death. He sinned not at all, yet He had assumed a mortal body. And if that is miraculous, so too is this: that He, the God, allowed Himself to be made Man and submitted to so deep a descent into matter. Verily, this is beyond comprehension—awe-inspiring, stirring. Wherefore in the first Epistle to Timothy, III, 16, we read: 'And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles,

\* See *Weihnachten in Kirche, Kunst und Volksleben*, Georg Rietschel. Leipzig, 1902.

† The passages are translated from the German.



(Courtesy of Royal Mail Lines Ltd.)



believed on in the world, received up into Glory.' (*i.e.* into the glory of the world of the Kyriotetes). And in the Epistle to the Hebrews II, 16/17, we read: 'For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.' (*i.e.* the mortality of men). 'Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren . . . to suffer . . . and be tempted.' Therefore I greet this day of festival and love it; voicing my love many times to the end that you also may be drawn together under the spell of this love. I fervently beseech that in ardour and devotion each one of you shall make his house empty\* to the end that we may behold the Lord lying in the manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes—in very truth a miraculous, awe-inspiring vision. For how could we ask pardon, how expect forgiveness, if, when He Himself for our sakes has come down from heaven, we will not quit our house to draw nigh Him? If Magi from the land of Persia came and beheld Thee lying in the manger, Thou O Christ will not deny to us this blessed vision, if we but move towards it. For if we come in faith we too shall see Him lying in the manger."

John of Chrysostom means that those who come with understanding will actually see Him in the manger, for they know that the manger is the sickle-shaped vessel of the Monstrance in which the Host—the Child—rests. And so he continues:

"This table" (the altar) "takes the place of the manger. For there too the Body of the Lord will rest, not, as of yore, clad in swaddling clothes, but bright with the radiance of the Holy Spirit. Those who are initiated know whereof I speak."

He means that those who have learnt to see, know that in an act of Consecration truly celebrated in the Spirit, the Host itself, through the power of the consecrating act, assumes the shining aura which has its symbolic expression in the golden monstrance, but is always visible in the Spirit for those whose eyes are open. And he continues:

"Picture to yourselves what it means to behold the Sun that has come down from Heaven to dwell on Earth, letting his radiance shine out from this place over *all* men." (Here he is describing empirically what is seen by those who can follow the act of Consecration with spiritual vision.) "But if the light that is visible cannot shine without arousing wonder in the hearts of all who behold it, only consider what it signifies to see the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness streaming from our own flesh and sending light into the soul." (The 'Sun of Righteousness' is what Julian the Apostate calls the *Good*.)

John of Chrysostom says, therefore, that he who truly partakes of the Communion receives the Christ-Radiance of the Host into his own, human aura.

Thus can man participate in the descent of the Sun God into a human body. Man can be permeated with the Christ, can be "christened" in the real sense. The words of John of Chrysostom are full of significance, because again in our day the Christmas festival is undergoing a change. Not only the individual human being, but the social and economic life—the Earth herself—must be permeated with the peace-giving sun-aura of the Christ.

In the sense of these words of John of Chrysostom, the Christmas festival represents the complete fulfilment of the prophecy of Zarathustra, as we find it in the Zend Avesta:

"In prayer we venerate the ether-aura of the Sun, mighty, warmth bearing, God-begotten.  
It shall pass over to the most victorious of the Saviours,  
and to those who will be His Apostles."†

\* He means that the soul must make itself ready to receive the Divine Word, the Divine Inspiration, in inner stillness and emptiness, in order that, at Christmas, the birth of the Child may take place in the soul.

† From the German translation by Beckh.

John of Chrysostom continues: "I myself have longed for this day and I have longed to celebrate it together with a great congregation" (that is to say, the Mysteries are to be made public), "and I pray without ceasing that the space set apart for the listeners may be full as it is on this day. We rejoice greatly that it should be so, yet it is not ten years" (he is preaching in the year 388 A.D.) "since the day first became known to us" (In Constantinople in the year 379 A.D.) "Nevertheless through your fervour it has blossomed as though it had been given to us from ancient times, untold years ago."

John of Chrysostom now proceeds to calculate very shrewdly why the 25th December must be the correct date of the birth of the Child between whose mother and the other mother of the as yet unborn John the Baptist there took place the meeting of which the Bible tells. At this meeting between the two mothers the child of Elisabeth moved for the first time in her womb. And on the basis of these indications as to the difference in time between the birth of the two children, John of Chrysostom reckons the date of the birth of the Jesus Child, on the assumption that the Baptist was born on the 24th June. His reckoning is as follows.—On the only day in the whole year when the High Priest was permitted to enter the holy of holies, Zacharias went into this most sacred sanctuary of the temple. This was on Michaelmas Day (29th September). On this day, as the Bible narrates, John the Baptist was conceived. Six months later—at Easter—the Jesus Child is conceived, being born nine months later, namely, at Christmas. Thus the figure of John the Baptist, in whom the mysteries of time and space are contained, leads us through the Church's year. The Church's year itself is the temple of God—so says John of Chrysostom. At Michaelmas we reach the holy of holies in this temple of the year, whereas the other seasons lead us to other precincts of the temple, to the courtyard or to the interior. In the holy of holies there is revealed to us the mystery of the birth of the Child—the mystery of which John the Baptist is the guardian. John of Chrysostom's method of reckoning takes historical tradition into account. But the historical narrative corresponds with the views which in the ancient Mysteries were evolved out of the phenomena presented by Nature.

The sermon of John of Chrysostom from which extracts have been given opens up a vista of the thought-world of a courageous epoch when Christianity was not regarded as a fixed and immovable edifice but when men accepted the truth of Christ's resurrection and could thus believe in an onflowing, living Christ Impulse.

To the earliest Christians, Christmas was the time of the birth of the historical Jesus. To the fourth century of our era it was the festival of the birth of the Cosmic Word in the human soul, as pictured in the act of Consecration on the altar. The house, that is to say, the soul, must be made empty in order in this state of quiescent receptivity to hear the Divine Voice proclaim: "Unto you is born this day, the Saviour."

And again in our time, a change is taking place in the human soul. In the days of John of Chrysostom or of St. Augustine, the "I" found its bearings within the life of *soul*. Men experienced how through a realisation of the words of St. Paul, "Not I but Christ in me" (*i.e.* at the place where the "I" lives in the soul), the Christ, the Cosmic Word, the moral Impulse is able to work, when the "house is empty" (that is to say, when the soul is ready to receive).



The forces of "kings" and of "shepherds" could then pay homage to the Cosmic Word now born in the innermost being. Kingly in nature are the forces of knowledge in the soul; simple in nature are the forces of faith living in a soul filled with devotion. In the course of the training which leads to higher knowledge there is a transformation of *thinking* into inner perception, inner vision, and this power of Imagination in the soul is represented by one of the Kings. But there is also a metamorphosis of *feeling* into knowledge. It is achieved by making the "house" empty of personal feelings. By this act, the second kingly power—the power of Inspiration—is awakened. The third step is the surrender of the *will* to the point where it becomes one with destiny, receiving and welcoming all that is a means of purification in the tests and trials of fate. With this third kingly power of Intuition we place ourselves deliberately and knowingly in the hands of the divine guidance.

The shepherd-forces are those of thinking, feeling and willing as they are in their essential nature, when sustained by purity of heart.

Man has thus within him three shepherd-powers and three kingly powers. With these powers he venerates the Being who is laid in the manger of selflessness indicated by the words of Paul: "Not I but Christ in me." This Being who is born in the human soul, tiny and powerless to begin with, is none the less the mighty Word, the divine-creative Word. Such was the experience in the fourth century of our era.

Christ's descent into a human body was intelligible to the simple hearts of shepherds and the wise heads of kings. Thus was the mystery of the incarnation of the Godhead revealed to those who in reverence and devotion created the place within their own hearts for the birth of the divine Word, the divine Inspiration.

In our time again we are in the throes of a change that is taking place in the powers of the soul and Spirit. Our problem is no longer the membering of the "I" into the *soul*, but the membering of the "I" into the *world*. What conception of Nature will enable man as a being of soul and Spirit to find his place within the picture of Nature? The natural science and sociological theories of the nineteenth century, far from answering the problem, denied to the human being as such a place either in the natural or social order. The world of Nature became a mechanism within which the spiritual being of man could find no place and the structure of social life, transformed by the machine, was ultimately to abandon the unemployed to their fate. But in the twentieth century there are born the forces whereby the picture of Nature and of the social life presented by the nineteenth century is superseded and space created for the "I" of man. In materialistic conceptions of history, the creative Spirit of man is deprived of freedom and its very existence threatened. Man is supposed to regard himself as a mere product of the world around him—and this a purely material, economic world.

But as a matter of fact, the latest scientific research and the most recent happenings in the social life indicate that what was considered to have been supplanted by the scientific and social picture of the world evolved in the nineteenth century, is awakening with fresh vigour. The conscious freedom of the individual has never been so clearly expressed as in Rudolf Steiner's *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* (*Die Philosophie der Freiheit*). This "philosophy" is that of the human being who is conscious of

the "I" not merely in the *soul* but in the *world*. He who stands as a free spiritual being in the world must recognise the existence of other spiritual beings around him and allow them their freedom too. Thus there arises the "live-and-let-live" attitude of the free individual who with his understanding of the real significance of individualism will be *social* in the true sense because of his realisation that others too are individuals. If as the fruit of this a man is to find for himself and for his fellow creatures at the same time a complete picture of the world, place must be found in him for the reality of spiritual being.

This is the picture of the world given by Rudolf Steiner. It embraces the whole of natural science, not merely in the aspect of physical evolution but also in the aspect of the motive forces of this evolution, namely, the Spirit. For behind the rich variety of the forms in the external process of evolution stands the Spirit, imparting to these forms both meaning and purpose. Out of this picture of the world all interwoven with the Spirit there can arise a new conception of the social life in which man, as an individuality, has a real place, as well as humanity taken as a whole, which, after all, consists of individuals. If the individual realises his own being in both these aspects, he will experience his nationhood along this spiritual path. For nationhood weaves between man and humanity as the individual development of a group of human beings. The "people" or the "nation" is neither the aggregate nor the unit, but the process of individuation within community and the fellowship of individuals. Nationhood, in the real sense, is a higher stage of Egohood, a selfless transcending by the individual of his own being without losing his centre, and also without persistence within the narrow boundaries of the personal self.

Thus, viewed with the eyes of Spirit, the transition from the individualism which was the crown of evolution as presented in the nineteenth century to the experiencing of nationhood is an onward step in the development of the Christ Principle. For the soul must pass through the stage of nationhood on the path leading over from the "I" to humanity.

We ourselves are standing at this point in evolution. In our time, Christ would be the Teacher of the nations and peoples. It is to them that He is born in the holy hours of *our* Christmas festival. Over the portal of the Greek temple were the words: "Man, Know Thyself." But over the temple of modern manhood stand the words which denote a further stage: "Know yourselves as Folk-Souls." Inasmuch as the "I" experiences itself not only in the *soul* but in the *world*, Egohood is realised in the individuality of the nationhood. And just as shepherds and kings once set out to pay homage to the incarnation of the Divine Spirit in one human being, so in our time the forces of the heart and the powers of knowledge must be stirred, to the end that obeisance may be made to the new impulse that has been born, and the Christ Impulse, in the form in which it works in this our age, may be known and understood.

The Christ Impulse is never at a standstill. Every Christmas its call resounds: "Unto you there is born this day the Saviour." And it is for us to live according to this call. There is no other way than to recognise that the traditional forms of the "State" are relics of the phase of evolution when the "I" had first to be led to its apex but that to carry over *this* "I" into the feeling of nationhood is something that has been superseded in evolution. The *other* impulse towards realisation of the self must be fulfilled

(continued in page 55)



# The Mystic Way

## VII. MYSTIC LOVE.

by Raymund Andrea

**T**HE DISCIPLE WHO ENTERS upon the experience of the dark night of the soul, faces the issues of life and death within his own personality. His undeviating ascent on the mystic way is a silent petition to the unseen Powers that he may pass through the darkness of mystical death to all in the personal life that is unworthy to live in the light of Christ. It is a term of adjustment to the values of life, when much is taken away, when much has to be consciously put away, which is a weight and hindrance to the disciple. It is a term of some duration, for the personality is tried in its most vulnerable part and rebels at that which it has evoked. The type of disciple, his native strength and the extent of his past evolution, are determining factors as to the way in which he will pass this term. But whatever changes the purgation of the dark night may work in him, one cardinal virtue will emerge which will be the hallmark of his discipleship: the spirit of mystic love will be born in him, tolerant, kind and long suffering.

It may appear to be a platitude, and a well-worn one, to say that the disciple must be the exponent of love. The orthodox religious life stagnates in platitudes: they provide a safe anodyne for the conscience. But on the mystic way there are some platitudes which are laws of stern necessity. They are basic laws of discipleship. They cease to be formulæ on the tongue and become dictates of the heart. That the disciple must divinely love is one of them. A living compassion for the suffering of our fellowmen is rarely born in us until life has brought us the like experience. And life is so burdened with forms of suffering that few have not some sympathy with it. But how many carry in their hearts and manifest to the world the force and blessing of true mystic love, which is, lest we have forgotten it, in simple truth, the love of Christ? Small wonder is it that so few emulate what is rarely seen. It is the mission of the mystic to show forth and radiate upon the world that illuminating influence.

During the term of the dark night we seek in vain without for consolation or assistance. It helps us somewhat to ponder the experience of those who have passed through and found the reward of patience and fortitude; but in the main we are left alone to find our own way. It is not a token of strength and development to rest upon others. That is what the dark night has to teach us. And so searching is the experience, touching the very vitals of life, that, when we are through, there is little in human nature we fail to see the meaning of, or cannot rightly appraise, and show compassion for it. The word of Pascal, the face of Steiner, and the anguish of Christ, asking that the cup might be taken from Him, come back to us as striking comments upon "the ingress into the divine shadow," wherein is given personal and experimental knowledge of the sorrow of humanity. For in that which befalls one soul during the term of the dark night, is foreshadowed that which must befall all souls when the hour comes. It is that fore-knowledge, the long range vision of what must be, which slays hatred in the heart of the disciple, takes away the right and privilege of judgment upon human

weakness and error, and instils the spirit of compassion which sees in all the operation and out-working of divine law.

Sympathetic insight into human nature, and a compassionate attitude towards all that this insight reveals, are but one aspect of the experience derived from the dark night; but it is the most important one. It determines and stabilises once for all one's attitude towards others and makes him a forceful influence for good. There are other aspects, of individual significance and benefit which may be noted. There is the liquidation of Karma, which is of prime evolutionary value to the disciple; the liberation from definite personal hindrances which have held him back from a free expression of his deepest self; the consciousness of abiding and imperturbable strength and spiritual reliance arising from the chaos of the personal life; and peace and certitude for the future, because the fire of the soul has raised him to his rightful place of divine sonship. It is therefore an experience which reorients the entire psychology of the disciple. Each aspect of it ramifies deeply into the past and carries its own peculiar psychological and spiritual interest. Obviously then, what we call the dark night is very far from being a term denoting merely an emotional experience which has significance only for an impressionable few of the many on the way. Rather, it is a spiritual privilege offered to the few for which the many on the way are not yet ready. I do not like the word privilege, because on the mystic way there are really no privileges: every step of the way is fought for and won. But I wish to point the fact strongly to the occult theorist, who has yet to learn the value of spiritual emotion, that it is of the nature of a privilege to receive this invitation of the soul to intimate participation in its own inmost life, and he cannot afford to neglect the special spiritually emotive preparation which alone can entitle him to it.

In the second paper of this series, on "Mystic Meditation," I referred to the meditation upon the nature of the soul as love, as a foundation for ascent on the mystic way. On looking back to this practice from a more advanced stage the disciple may recognise it as the indispensable cultural and refining influence which has made everything else possible for him. This truth will be accepted by the disciple with complete approval. He knows that love opens all doors on the mystic way. It is from the theorist we may expect criticism, or an attitude of indifference. Of all the persons who suffer from inhibitions and repressions and all the other complexes which psychology has discovered in these latter days, the occult theorist is often a classic example. His intention is good and he means well, but he is so bent upon focussing the life energies inward for self development, that even the most normal expression of the emotional nature carries with it moral censure. One-pointed concentration is his gospel, and if he deviates one step from it, he is lost. "But ye have not so learned Christ." Not all the concentration in the world will bring us so near to Christ as the following of that which Pascal and Steiner saw in Him. This is a hint for all of us on the mystic way. We may concentrate until our skulls crack in perfect detachment: it



will not give us one heart throb of the divine fervour which made Christ and these disciples perfect servants.

I have come to the conclusion, through close contact with the lives of a large number of aspirants, that many of them are really afraid of the expression of love in the mystic sense. Within the narrow limits of a personal relationship they may know the power and value of love in their lives, but so far as mystical love participation in other lives is concerned, they are sleeping souls. This is an observable and regrettable fact. The causes of this inhibited love expression are many and various, and of too remote yet intimate and psychological a nature to be discussed here. It is only possible to refer to a prevailing condition among aspirants. Each has his own problem, and individual study and reflection can solve it. In some aspirants, it must be said, the refusal of mystical participation is a sublimated form of selfishness. The remedy lies in deliverance from the bondage of their own will. The ideas about will and control freely imbibed from Eastern literature are the cause of half the failures on the mystic way, or the cause of so few reaching the goal of their desire on the way. Their primary need is to learn, with true understanding and humility, the surrender of the will, that the blessing they have so far received on the way may pass into human hearts. The love of the soul which should flow forth freely upon all, is circumscribed and turned back upon themselves in meticulous thoughtfulness to ensure self development. As a purely mental exercise this has its value, but it has no mystical significance. It is as alien to the life of Christ and the Masters as is the calculated self-consideration of those professed religionists whose religion is a veneer to cover the intents and purposes of an irreligious soul. Is it any wonder that unselfish souls who know nothing of the way do the most to bless and uplift their fellowmen? I know these are hard words; but the impeachments of Christ were harder, and true. The word of Christ was the most destructive ever launched against mankind during two thousand years. But there was a constructive influence behind it. The basic concepts implanted by Him in human consciousness were the sacredness and value of individuality and the necessity for individual effort towards ascension in consciousness; the idea of the oneness of humanity through the realisation of the indwelling soul; and mystical participation in the lives of others through love. In a word, He taught individual responsibility, that by his own personal effort alone can one attain to divinity; that the same opportunity of mystical realisation was open to all men; and that through mystical participation through love identification with Himself and all souls should climax the mystic way. It is a very old theme. If the orthodox religionist has forgotten the import of it, or has never been taught it, there is no excuse for the aspirant on the way. He has personally to accept this teaching laid down by Christ and work out the concepts of it to the letter in all its implications in his own life. It is of little merit in him to regard with legitimate disgust institutional religion, that chequered state passport to social position and professional prestige, if he has nothing more virile and worthy of emulation to put in its place.

It has been said that the degree of love in a man is the measure of his genius, and the degree of his self-seeking is the measure of his narrow-mindedness. There is a deep esoteric truth here. The disciple on the way accepts and exemplifies in his life the three concepts of the Christ life mentioned above. He accepts individual responsibility for development in taking the various

mystical stages; in the contemplative stage he contacts the nature of the soul and manifests it in world service; and ultimately, he seeks identification with all souls through mystic love. This last stage is in a high degree technical and calls for a good deal of inward discipline. The measure of his genius on the way will be according to his love, and no purely mental or occult discipline will alter the fact, nor will anything else take the place of it. I have known disciples of great promise and possessing mystical gifts that placed them far ahead of their fellows in evolution, but they failed in one thing, and this compelled them to pause as before a closed door: they had not realised the value, potency and absolute necessity of crowning their long labours with the mystic love which leads to identification with Christ and all souls. No matter how lofty the soul, or how true it is to its discipline, until it has become wholly merciful, softened and suffused with mystic love for all, dying to its own will that others may rise through its abnegation and self-forgetfulness, it cannot pass on and stand in the presence of those who have made the last surrender. It is profoundly true that the degree of one's self-seeking is the measure of his narrow-mindedness, even though that narrow-mindedness may be on a far higher level than what we usually think of when we speak of narrow-mindedness in common parlance. Why is this? Because identification with other souls through mystic love participation can only come through inspirational sensitivity to souls. How can we truly assist the evolution of souls if we cannot enter into the inmost nature of the soul? Many students pride themselves upon their knowledge of others through the exercise of certain occult arts, which is no doubt very interesting and diverting, possibly informative. But the soul is an original and divine entity and stands aloof from all stereotyped calculations that would mark its passage and influence. It is little less profane than judging of the soul of a man by the contours of his face. The disciple may legitimately use these adjuncts of knowledge in his service to others, but he will never regard them as basic and decisive. Inspirational sensitivity to the atmosphere and nature of the soul is the way of entrance and understanding, and this is only unfolded through love. Love is the attractive and revealing quality of the soul and is the only key to other souls. The terms of ascent on the way should result, if purposefully undertaken, in an increasing sensitivity to life in all forms. The more the disciple withdraws into himself in consecrated living, the more sympathetically must he enter into other lives: the two conditions are coetaneous on the way. The deeper the knowledge of his own soul, the more profound his knowledge of and mystical participation in the life of other souls. This entrance and participation must be so real and vital that the problem of another soul, its quality, tendency and possibility, must have equal claim upon him with that which concerns himself. It is this attitude of living in and with other souls which develops in the disciple an inspirational inclusiveness, gives an unerring insight into their psychology, and inspires him to right thought and action in their behalf. Through this sensitivity the disciple reads the psychology of the soul, which, let it be said, is very far removed from a prurient psycho-analysis and the psychology of the schools. Mystic love has no place in the exercise of the technique of the latter, penetrating and revealing as it is. An acute and discriminating intellect may master it with ease, and apply it honourably and usefully, but only within the limits of its soulless domain. Indeed, it is only

*(continued in page 31)*



# A New Beginning

by Eleanor C. Merry

**T**HE MODERN MYSTIC HAS PUBLISHED several articles by Mrs. L. Kolisko dealing with her researches and experiments in connection with the planets and the metals, the moon, and its influence upon plant growth, and which are the results of her studies in Rudolf Steiner's Spiritual Science. Readers will also have observed that an Appeal was printed for funds to open a laboratory for this work in England.

The "embryo" of this laboratory is now in existence. A small bungalow, adjoining the gardens at Bray, near Maidenhead, which represent the nucleus of the Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation, has been purchased. It is intended later to build on to it an adequate laboratory where Mrs. Kolisko will be able to carry out extensive experiments in various fields of this most fascinating form of biological science.

On Saturday, November 6th, the bungalow, its modest rooms filled with the evidence of Mrs. Kolisko's unique genius, was "opened" in the presence of a few friends. They represented the great numbers who have an unshakeable belief in the immense practical value of the work which Mrs. Kolisko has done and can do in the future.

I have known Mrs. Kolisko for a number of years, and I look upon her always with astonishment. Never have I met any woman with so dauntless a faith and courage. Nothing is too hard for her to attempt, no expenditure of strength and time is too great for her. Among many other remarkable things, I saw displayed in one of the rooms a collection of mineral substances which had been subjected by her to a crystallising process at varying depths under the earth, to test the subterranean influences of the moon. To obtain these she had to descend into a specially dug pit, extending to a depth of sixteen metres, and shut off from the surface at intervals of one metre, by a series of metal trap doors: sixteen doors to be separately opened before one could regain the day or star-light! Hours and hours were spent on these experiments, under conditions which would have terrified most people. And that represents only one—and relatively "small" part—of her incessant seventeen years' work, her descriptions of which readers of THE MODERN MYSTIC will have seen. By no means all of the results have yet been published; and we look forward to many publications in the future. A great part of her work is connected with medical as well as agricultural problems. But it goes without saying that the value and quantity of her future experiments must depend to a great extent upon the amount of financial help she may receive.



Mrs. L. Kolisko

For six months from the end of November Mrs. Kolisko will be travelling in India, having been invited to visit Southern India and Calcutta, and later Java, in order to lecture on the influence of the planets upon metals, of the moon upon plant-growth, etc. At Christmas she will be at Trivandrum; in January lecturing at the Science Congress in Calcutta, invited there by Dr. Mukerjee, Principal of the Homeopathic College, who is deeply interested in her work on the *Influence of the Infinitesimal*.

In India an immense interest exists concerning the question of cosmic influences, and in the spiritualisation of Science. Representative people in India find that Mrs. Kolisko's work accords in many respects with much that is to be found in the ancient Vedas, and which has so far eluded practical interpretation.

For the East, it is undoubtedly a burning question as to whether a bridge can be built between Science and Religion. For such a bridge—which can only arise through a *Spiritual Science*, would do far more than solve that immediate problem: it could be the means of uniting West and East in a new spirit of understanding and sympathy.

The East is looking anxiously to the West for signs of a spiritualising influence in modern science. The experience of many western individuals who have an intimate knowledge of eastern life brings constant proof of this; and the eagerness with which Mrs. Kolisko's visit is anticipated—as many letters received show—strengthens this view.

So what strikes me as particularly important is not so much the fact that somebody is going to give lectures in India on cosmic influences, but the fact that this work *emanates from the West*, and is being carried to India from England. It is trite enough to say that great things result from small beginnings; but I have come fresh from that extremely unpretentious little bungalow by the Thames, with my mind full of the great-heartedness of a little figure who has unostentatiously worked for seventeen years at disclosing the first of the great secrets of the planetary system, which lie beyond the range of our present science. Such things may have incalculably far-reaching results.

I know well that it has been no light task for her to leave her well-equipped laboratories abroad, and make a new beginning in a foreign land. I am sure that THE MODERN MYSTIC, with its ideal for bringing together Science and Mysticism, will wish her all success.



## THE MYSTIC WAY—(continued from page 29)

too often as much in need of a soul psychology to clarify its own views and conclusions as are those whom it essays to enlighten.

The true psychology of the soul which inspirational sensitivity reveals to the disciple through mystic love participation, leads to the identification or oneness with all souls as inculcated by Christ. That is the high point of the mystic way we are considering. It is not easy of attainment, but the culmination of long interior discipline in which love is the guiding light. But should not emphasis be laid upon impersonal love? Impersonal love! How deeply, seriously, and wholly onesidedly have aspirants taken to heart the doctrine of impersonal love. How they have endeavoured to slay their poor, hungry, mortal selves, because the Masters are said to be beyond personality and unmoved by human passion. I do not believe it. If I did, I should still think the aspirant a misguided person in trying to play the Master while he is yet merely a disciple in the making. A little right perspective on the way is such a gracious possession, and a real blessing to one's fellows. I have every sympathy with an aspirant who has so religiously imbibed the doctrine of impersonal love as being the only possible way of attainment, that he has forgotten what love is. He may say nevertheless, that it is one of the most perplexing problems he has to deal with. I grant it may be perplexing; but there is usually something blindly selfish in the background of it. If there is anything this world needs it is love, personal love, the love of Christ. His love, it seems to me, was personal enough. I think the people He consorted with are ample proof of that. He loved men and women, that is all; and He insisted upon the love of men and women, without distinction or reservation, as the one way of mystical realisation of the kingdom of the soul. The impersonal love of many half-educated aspirants is grounded upon a refined selfishness, or a reprehensible self-righteousness. And when it is grounded upon neither of these, it is grounded upon an abject fear to express what throbs and aches within their own heart. Well, those are self-erected barriers which must fall before the soul can ever know itself, not to mention entering upon the stage of mystical participation with other souls. It was said that these barriers or inhibitions of various kinds are of too intimate and psychological a nature to be discussed at length. Obviously, they differ in every case. But the resolution of this problem is precisely that which calls for the interior discipline mentioned. No disciple attains to the richness and fullness of the love of Christ without long probation. It is a studied pilgrimage with infinite necessary adjustments and readjustments, during which his many Karmic attachments and responsibilities are brought forth to the light of day by the fire working within him. If he is fully aware of his task and thoroughly prepared for it, he will accept, with patience and understanding, all that is involved in the orientation of his affectional life. The disciple who is advanced in the technique of the way will not be long delayed at this stage. The awakening fire will have reached a point of ascension and force in him which will swiftly release him from the inhibitions referred to. For observe, this release to mystical love participation is bound up with the attitude of fearlessness in regard to all personal considerations in following his own light. It is consideration for opinions, other people's opinions, which is mainly responsible, in this particular connection, for the non-participation which holds some disciples back from completion of experience. But a refusal to follow that which Karma prompts him to and makes

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possible in a particular cycle, is by no means an unusual condition, even in the case of a disciple. On the contrary, it is sometimes the most promising disciples, as said, who, with all their knowledge and many abilities, are held back from their highest objective because they fail to participate understandingly and willingly in the mystic love experience. Not that they are blind to this fact. Indeed, they suffer under the knowledge of it. There are intimate, psychological causes, of an inhibitory nature, set up in a former cycle, which deter them from complete life expression by their invisible bonds. Yet when the fire within has reached its strength, nothing of past or present will have power to stand against it. The true disciple will know that the essence of that fire is love itself and the soul energetic and expressive; and the soul so released from bondage by the example of Christ, will love after its own law, sanely, sublimely and inclusively.



# From Bethlehem to Calvary

By H. Le Gallienne

OF those who sought my crib at Bethlehem  
Heeding a voice and following a star,  
How many walked with me to Calvary?  
It was too far.

GLORY surrounded that once manged babe,  
And hope for men who struggled with their loss.  
But hope, fulfilled, came through my thorny crown  
And through my cross.

TRUTH was my sword and pain the accolade  
Which I bestowed on those who followed on,  
A tethered ass the charger which I chose  
To ride upon.

GONE was the glory, then, of Bethlehem,  
The gifts of Kings and Magi from the East;  
Gone were the multitudes and only twelve  
Were at the feast

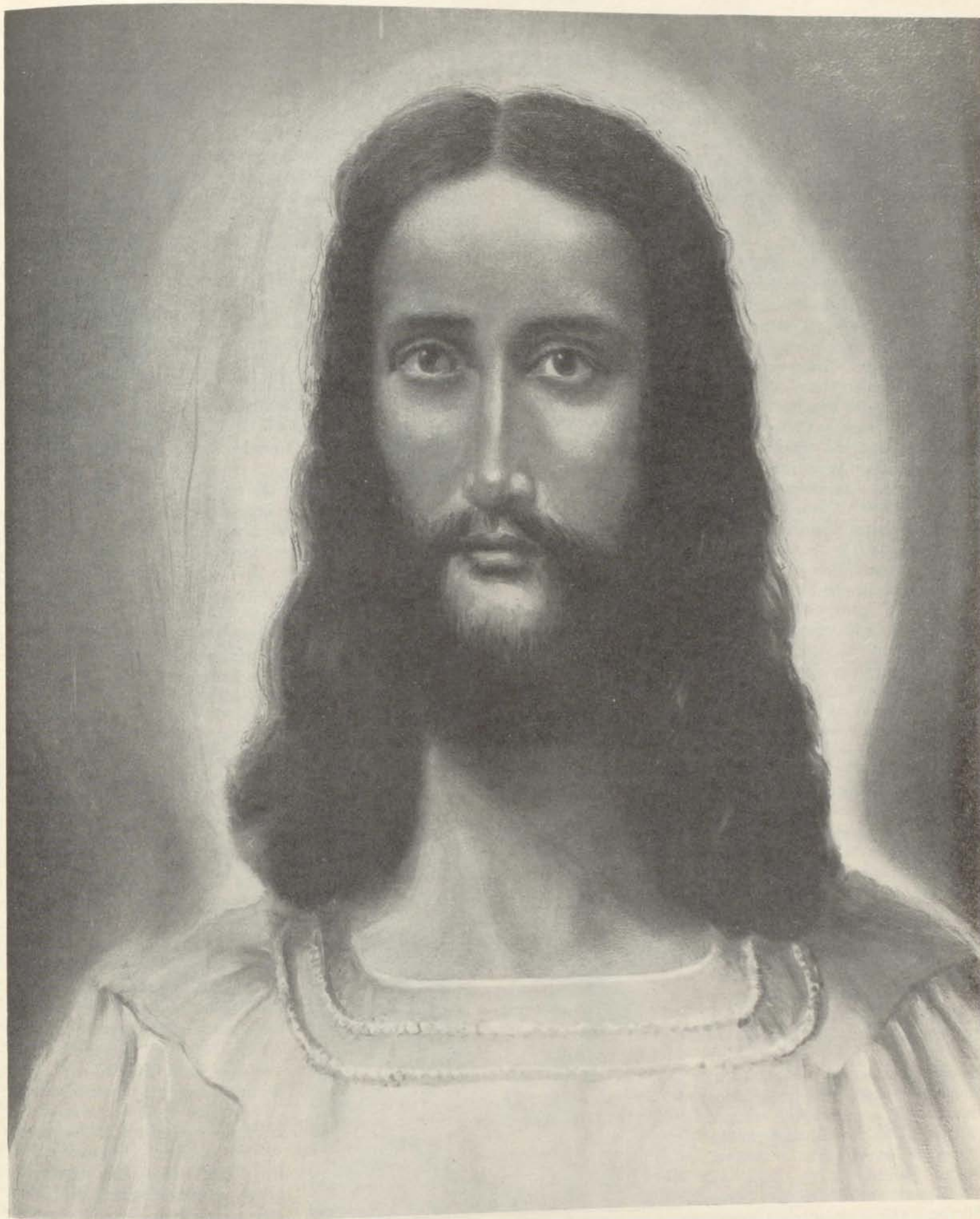
OF humble bread served in the upper room  
Where that sad cup was passed from hand to hand  
In token of my love for all mankind  
Within the land.

WHEN, at Gethsemane, I prayed alone  
That a more bitter cup might be withdrawn,  
Ye could not watch with me one little hour  
Until the dawn!

SO many sought my crib at Bethlehem  
Heeding a voice and following a star,  
But only Simon walked to Calvary—  
It was too far.

(This poem is re-printed here by kind permission of The Lucis Publishing Co. of New York.  
It is included in Mrs. Alice A. Bailey's "From Bethlehem to Calvary" published by them.—ED.)





*The Rosicrucian Conception of Jesus the Christ*

*(From an original life-size oil painting by Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order, A.M.O.R.C., and which hangs in the antechamber of the Supreme Grand Lodge Temple of the Rosicrucian Order at San Jose, California)*



# Francis Bacon, Mystic and Mason

Author of "Shake-speare: Creator of Freemasonry," and Editor of  
"Shake-speare's Sonnet Diary," etc.

by Alfred Dodd

"For I am a Servant to Posterity. . . .  
"To God, the Giver and Architect of Forms; and to the Angels  
and Higher Intelligencies who have Affirmative Knowledge."

FRANCIS BACON.

THREE HUNDRED YEARS HAVE passed since Francis Bacon lived, yet in every department of human thought his personality still challenges the world. More and more his ideals are dominating mankind, literary, scientific, ethical, mystical. This mysterious man has been the centre of intellectual conflict since the day when England's greatest Chancellor pleaded "guilty" to charges of bribery and corruption, being driven into the wilderness of the world like a scapegoat bearing the sins of others. To-day, however, people all over the world are beginning to revise their views regarding this great and good man whom Ben Jonson declared was the living embodiment of "Virtue." Slowly but surely the immortal Francis is coming "into his own"—the Chair of Apollo, the Kingdom peopled by the Gnostics, the "Men who Know," who have sifted Truth from Error, Reality from Illusion, having ceased to worship the Idols of the Market-Place.

Francis Bacon has long been a puzzle to historians and critics. Even by his contemporaries he was regarded as a "Proteus who changed his form and face daily." It is notorious that his later biographers contradict each other hopelessly respecting his motives, his ideals, his mental labours, his character, his real contributions to human thought. He is so many sided that no one yet has been big enough to comprehend this myriad-minded man. Hitherto he has been studied from particular angles—as a lawyer, philosopher, etc.—to the exclusion of others and the portraiture has usually risen no higher than the writer's own mentality. "The greatest genius that the world has ever seen" (Pope) has thus suffered from the commonplace minds who have tried to interpret him. We have been given superficial accounts respecting his exterior life but the fact that he was immersed in esoteric activities of an ethical nature has either been unknown to his critics, ignored or suppressed. The truth is that Francis Bacon led an open life and a concealed one; and his secret life was infinitely more important than his outward actions; for these hidden ideals actually dominated this dreamer of dreams who "could conceive like a poet and execute like a clerk of works," (Spedding).

He was born in the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1560-1. Historians regard

him as the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon and Lady Bacon, the Lord Keeper and the Chief Lady of the Queen's Chamber. Francis Bacon was thus nephew to Lord Burleigh, the then secretary of State. He was sent to Oxford at twelve. At sixteen he was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn. A few months later he went to the French Court with Sir Amias Paulett the British Ambassador.

Three years afterwards Sir Nicholas Bacon died and Francis then returned to England, living at Gray's Inn for a number of years. When twenty-three he became a member of Parliament. At forty, he produced a slight volume of ten Essays, assumed to be his first and only work. On James of Scotland taking the Throne he became "Sir Francis." At forty-five (1606) he married a girl in her 'teens, Alice Barnham. He then became successively Solicitor General, Attorney General, Head of the Chancery Court, Lord Chancellor, Keeper of the Great Seal, and, finally, Viscount St. Alban in 1620.

A few weeks later at the meeting of the new Parliament, Jan. 1620-1, charges were brought against him of corruption and bribery in the administration of the King's Court to which he pleaded guilty. He was dismissed his office, fined, sent to the Tower. On his release he devoted himself to literary work, endeavouring to complete a long projected outline of philosophy called "The Great Instauration," in which he hopelessly failed for the task was too herculean. The Work was to consist of Six Parts. It is said he died before completing the last Three. He is regarded as the Father of Experimental Science and Philosophy. He died in 1626 on Easter Sunday, a disgraced man, friendless and alone.

This is the usual school outline and is naturally accepted by the average man. But like many other biographies where State matters and Royal Secrets are concerned, this apparently straightforward story is by no means "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." There is actually very direct evidence—on purely academic research lines—that the mystery concerning Francis Bacon began with his birth, continued through life and did not end even with his alleged death in 1626. Indeed there are strong grounds to warrant the startling assertion that his actual mother was no less a person than the "Virgin Queen," Elizabeth Tudor, his father being the Earl of Leicester, the two having been married privately in September prior to the birth of Francis in January the following year.

He discovered the secret of his Royal Birth when some sixteen years of age, upon which the Queen immediately packed him out of the country. "I went," says he, "direct from Her



Lord Bacon.



Majesty's Royal hand." He thus went abroad carrying a tremendous secret of State as well as a personal one. It played a sinister part throughout his career and is a clue to much that is inexplicable in the dramatic and tragic events which crowded upon him in after years. From the day that "Baby Solomon" was born to the climax of knowledge that he was a Tudor, the sepia cloud began to form that veiled his real personality. When he eventually emerged from the shadows he was a "concealed man" whose real identity was as unknown to the world as Dumas' "Man in the Iron Mask." It was a secrecy imposed by State and Personal reasons, a secret morganatic marriage, a secret



Fig. 3.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Copy of the original Hilyard Miniature bound in Queen Elizabeth's Prayer book which was written in her own hand.



Fig. 4.

FRANCIS BACON AT EIGHTEEN.

Copy of the original Hilyard Miniature painted at the same time as that of Elizabeth.

*The youth must have possessed an extraordinary personality to have so impressed the artist that he wrote in Latin round the miniature, "Could I but paint his mind."*

birth, a secret life, and, at last, a secret death in an age of secrecy and dissimulation. These factors all constituted the necessary pre-requisites for a real Prince in Hiding to travel down the ages, playing the role of a concealed man, a mysterious Ethical Teacher, an anonymous author. Secrecy was in the marrow of his bones and the fibre of his being when he went as a youth to the splendour of the French Court. His genius turned secrecy and dissimulation into a legitimate expression which found its *Summum Bonum* in the founding of Secret Orders and Fraternities.

In France he fell in love with Queen Margaret of Navarre . . . a married woman whom he could not wed. Her salon was the centre of the literary lights—artists, philosophers, poets like Ronsard, Bessex, de Thou, Du Pleasas, etc., the "Pleides" they were termed who were trying to give France a higher culture. Under their spell Francis Bacon vowed to create a Renaissance in every department of Thought in England, scientific, philosophic, literary and ethical, and to give his country a flexible language of its own in place of Latin, the then language of culture, and the rude jargon of county dialects. While on the Continent he also contacted the secret Brotherhoods—then in a state of decay—that had kept the flame of the Mysteries alight from Virgil to Dante, the Knight Templars. He planned to re-create the old Orders on a modern basis that would inculcate primarily the cardinal principle of Christianity, then neglected by the Churches, Charity . . . a real Brotherhood bonded by Love.

Now the age of Francis Bacon was an unsafe one for Englishmen. The dead hand of the Roman Priest and the Lutheran

Pastor alike lay heavily on all who sought knowledge. For years the sectaries had been butchering and burning each other unmindful of the New Commandment, "That ye Love one another." There was the smelling out of witches by all the Churches with a wholesale savagery that reached a fearful height in the reign of James. There were common informers who made a regular living by denouncing men and women alleged to have passed some unguarded remark that aspersed the State or the King. When, therefore, Francis Bacon returned to England he knew that the only way that he could hope to lay "great Bases for Eternity" was to proceed in two ways, openly and secretly. Along certain lines of thought, experimental philosophy, he could publish openly, but those that appeared to trench on Church and State, such as Ethics, Mysticism, Education, Politics, could only be prosecuted in secret; as a concealed writer under nom-de-plumes and as a concealed teacher the Ethical Solomon. Solomon's Temple he thus erected invisibly, the prototype of Solomon's House mentioned in the "New Atlantis" through which he established to the eyes of the world the Genesis of our present Royal Society with Freemasons like Boyle, Sir C. Wren, Sir R. Moray, Ashmole, Locke, etc. The first three parts of the "Great Instauration" dealt with the visible world of matter; the last three parts were concerned with the invisible or concealed world—his anonymous writings, his secret teachings. He was thus working at his complete system all his life, at all the parts concurrently. And when he "died" in 1626 he had completed his Plan and established the Ethical Fraternities which he regarded as the flower and fruit of his life's work. He did not fail in his herculean task after all.

Among his anonymous writings were the "Shakespeare Plays," the Rosicrucian Manifestoes (pub. in Germany 1614) and the Masonic Rituals. Through the latter he sought to interpret Nature by Allegory and Symbol on a purely ethical basis, his prime aim being to perform the role of an Ethical Teacher calling men back to the actual practice of the principle of "simple Goodness" in everyday life, the manifesting of Love, square conduct and upright intentions.

On his return to England he established the Rosicrosse Literary Society of concealed writers whose chief aim was to uplift the common people by educational works of all kinds; the invisible Rosicrucian Colleges which still function; the hierarchy of Masonic Degrees which culminated in his own Cypher Signature—"Thirty Three." He dedicated himself to the ideals of "Pallas Athena" the classical Shaker of the Spear of Knowledge at the Serpent of Ignorance. He paid an illiterate rustic for the use of his name (because the name "Shaksper" looked like "Shakespeare" in print) and sent him back to Stratford to lie low, while as an anonymous scribe he wrote "to medicine the foul diseases of the world," each Play being a sermon against some particular aspect of human viciousness. Secure behind his living vizard, he was enabled to write freely, without fear of consequence, against the crying evils of his age and implant in the common people some of his own lofty idealism.

His Fall was brought about by a conspiracy of evil men who hated him for his virtue. He was actually commanded by the King to abandon his defence and to plead guilty to the charges of Bribery so that James and his favourite, Buckingham, might not be brought into open conflict with the House of Commons. Two years later with Ben Jonson (1623) he published the Great



Shakespeare Folio, some seven years after Shaksper of Stratford's death. By 1626 he had completed the "Instauration" and he then "died" to the world only. He simply "fled" into retirement from a world that had used him so ill.

"In the sixty sixth year of his life . . ." says Manley P. Hall, "Francis Bacon feigned death and passed over into Germany, there to guide the destinies of his Fraternities for nearly twenty five years after his death."

*Lectures on Ancient Philosophies, p. 407.*

This brief résumé—which can be proved to the hilt—presents a very different portrait from the one drawn by members "of the uninstructed world." Indeed the incidents of his early life show that he was a precocious genius—"a scholar from his cradle born" says his chaplain, Dr. Rawley—who knew intuitively that he had been born into the world, like Hamlet, to help "to set it right" according to a Divine Plan. He was a mere boy of fifteen when he conceived the idea of creating an intellectual revolution along material, ethical and spiritual lines, a revival and advancement of learning despite the frowns of the academic pedant and priest. He clung to his dream despite poverty, prison and cruel rebuffs until he had seen it materialise. To Father Fulgentio he wrote :

"It is forty years since I composed a Juvenile Work about these things . . . and the Zeal and Constasy of my mind has not waxed old in this Design nor after so many years grown cold and indifferent. I am persuaded it may be ascribed to Divine encouragement. Our Meanness attempteth Great Things, placing our hopes only in this, that they seem to proceed from the Providence and Immense Goodness of God."

In these latter words may be found the real mainspring of Francis Bacon's activities. He knew that he was led by the Divine Mind. It was therefore no puffed-up arrogance which made him write :

"Francis of Verulam reasoned thus with himself and judged it to be for the interest of the present and future generations that they should be acquainted with his thoughts. . . .

"For I have taken all Knowledge to be my Province. . . .

"I am a Servant to Posterity."

Now . . . how came Francis Bacon to write with such emphatic consciousness in this way ? Was it simply the arrogance of intellectual genius or was it the result of positive knowledge of God as the abiding Reality, man as a spirit here and now, the truth of an Unseen World of Invisible Intelligencies, and that there was actual communication between the two Worlds of humans and spirits ?

Even a cursory examination of his works by eyes that know what to search for, indicate a mystical strain, and that he truly possessed an "awareness" of the reality of unseen principalities and powers that could touch mortal beings under favourable circumstances. In short, he knew as Milton knew, that

"Millions of unseen creatures walk this earth  
Unseen both when we wake and when we sleep."

He called these Higher Beings (whom Theosophists would term "the Masters" and Spiritualists, "Angel Guides") "Affirmative Intelligencies." And he lets us understand in a variety of subtle ways (for he dare not write openly and so raise the cry of "witchcraft") that he not merely believed in their existence as a philosophic tenet but that he was aware of their presence through experimental research, through supernormal manifestations which we term to-day "Psychic Phenomena." Moreover he possessed within himself an interior knowledge

and quickened faculties which are the peculiar heritage of every Mystic by which he intuitively apprehends and comprehends truth and wisdom through a psychic sense or pre-natal activities

Fig. 6.

# THE TWO PILLARS OF MASONRY.

Page 53, Upper Half, of Whitney's Choice of Emblems, 1586. Facsimile.

53 = S.O.W.

*In dies meliora.*



The S.S. **T**HE greedie Sow so longe as shee dothe finde,  
Some scatterings lefte, of hauest vnder foote  
S.W. { She forward goes and neuer lookes behinde,  
SE. { While anie sweete remaineth for to roote,  
{ Even soe wee shoulde, to goodnes euerie date  
{ Still further passe, and not to turne nor staie.

See ! Senior Warden ! The Sanctum Sanctorum.

The number of the Page 53  $\frac{18}{S.} \frac{14}{O.} \frac{21}{W.}$  The word

"SOW" constantly appears in Elizabethan literature as a play on the word "Bacon." But "S.O.W." are the initials for "Sons of Wisdom" applied to Masons and Rosicrucians in that Era. The figure in the Emblem points the "SOW" to the Two Pillars of Masonry which carries the motto "Plus Ultra," i.e., "More Beyond," a favourite motto of Francis Bacon. The "sow" is called "Senior Warden" because he is the special guard of the Pillars which lead to the Sanctum Sanctorum . . . hence the message up the Initial capitals. . . . "See, Senior Warden ! The Sanctum Sanctorum." In the ritual it is only the Senior Warden who is immediately outside the door of the Sanctum. Esoterically, "S.O.W." = "Supt. of Works" in the Craft like the figure in the Emblem. The light and dark "A's" are seen in the CENTRE forming a Pyramid. . . . Francis Bacon's favourite symbol for his philosophy. They represent also a square and compasses. If the two "A's" are placed across each other instead of by the side, they would form the well-known Masonic Symbol. The three Arches in the centre refer to the Royal Arch. The name of "F. Bacon" is spelled thus : "F" on the right-hand side in the frame of the building ; "B" is placed on the extreme right by the bottom of "F." thus :  $\infty$  ; "A" in the centre ; "C" in the third arch :  $\infty$  ; "O" is the right-hand curl at the end of the scroll across the Pillars ; and "N" in the two Pillars with the fancy scroll. This Emblem proves that Speculative Freemasonry was in being in 1586, the year before Shaksper left Stratford for London. Whitney was a clerk at one time in the Earl of Leicester's employ, and as such was known to Francis Bacon—hence the connection between the publication of the Emblem book of Francis Bacon's and the clerk Whitney. THIS IS THE FIRST REFERENCE TO THE PILLARS OF MASONRY IN LITERATURE. They are afterwards attached to Francis Bacon's Works and were known as "Lord Bacon's Pillars."

quite apart from the ordinary channels of learning. He thus wrote :

"The object of my philosophy is, therefore, God, Nature, Man . . . that Knowledge or rather glimmering of Knowledge concerning God which may be obtained by the Light of Nature and the contemplation of his Creatures and which I call Natural Theology."

Throughout his works are therefore scattered the keynotes of his secret Ethical System which he established—Freemasonry, the ethics he enunciated being so pronounced that even Lord Campbell (who never suspected that Francis Bacon was a great ethical teacher) actually wrote that,

"A most perfect body of Ethics might be made out of the writings of Francis Bacon."



The full flower of his philosophy is therefore to be found—apart from certain anonymous writings—in the Rituals of the Thirty Three Degrees, the Rosicrucian Manifestoes and the S.R.I.A. Colleges.

"I shall publish part," he wrote, "and reserve part to a private succession . . . for it is not to the taste and capacity of all . . . I carry out my Designs. . . . I am going the same way as the Ancients . . . and have something better to produce. . . . I build a Holy Temple after the Model of the World. . . ."

In "Valerius Terminus" he speaks of his two methods of publication, one reserved the other open, the former being for his chosen disciples whom he calls his "Sons," which shall be "ORAL," "TRADITIONAL" and "reserved to a succession of Hands." This, of course, is nothing else than Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism.

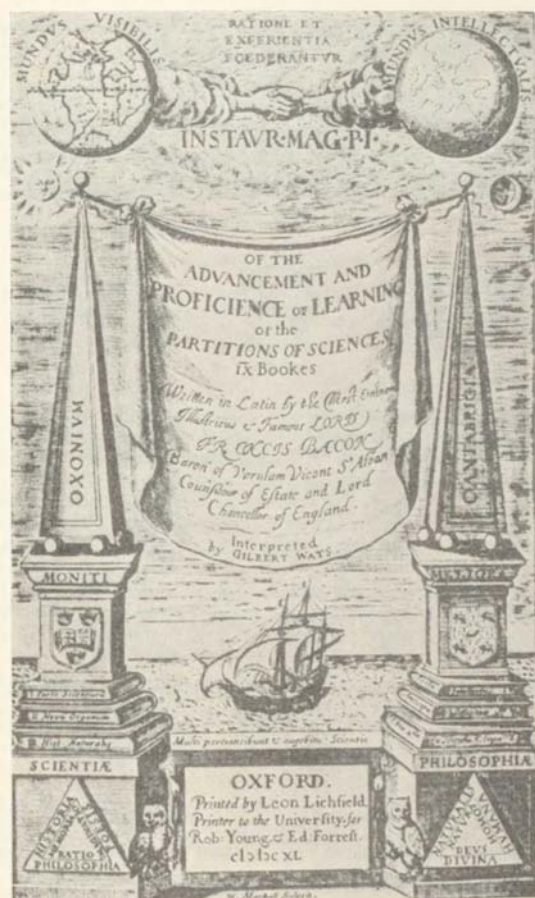


Fig. 5.

#### FRANCIS BACON'S MASONIC PILLARS.

The Title page of the 1640 edition of Lord Bacon's *Advancement* published by the Rosicrucian Literary Society, indicates quite clearly his connection with Masonry by signs and symbols. The six tables of his Philosophy are to be seen and his *Invisible Works* are indicated as the Missing Part of the Instauration under the Celestial Globe. . . . The Shakespearean Works. The two owls denote Secrets. The Adventure Ship across the ocean of Time symbolises his prophetic Time-experiment . . . inductive reasoning applied to his Concealed Works and a self-planned Revelation of Personal Identity when the harbour is won.

We have seen that this tremendous idea of the Revival of Ethics and Learning, based on the Ancient Wisdom and the Drama of the Mysteries, was born in Francis Bacon's mind when fifteen years of age, the same age as the unknown author who wrote one of the most important of the Rosicrucian Manifestoes, the "Chymical Marriage," no other indeed than the "Fra. F.B., M.P.A., Pictor et Architectus of the 'Fama,'" the initials of

"Francis Bacon, A Past Master," the founder himself, known in the Colleges as "Father Rosicrusse" and "Christian Rosencreutz."

The mainspring, then, of all Francis Bacon's activities was his direct knowledge of "God and one's immortal Soul," an ethical urge arising out of the profundity of his own nature, termed by him a divine "Philanthropia." Francis Bacon's clarion call was not merely to the Advancement of Learning, the interpretation of Nature by scientific method so that man might be benefited physically. His goal was not simply to provide creature comforts for the animal man but to interpret man as a *Spiritual Entity*, as the microcosm of the Universe, an Immortal Soul that recognised sonship with the Great Thinker who broods His Thoughts into Nature and living Flesh. His entire scheme had its bases on earth but the crowned apex lifted its head into the starry heavens of Infinity . . . the World Unseen known peculiarly to Seers and Psychics enabling them to speak with Authority on these things.

"I have been induced to think," says Dr. Rawley, "that if ever there were a Beam of Knowledge derived from God upon any man in these modern times, it was upon him: for though he was a great reader of books, yet he had not his knowledge from books, but from some *Grounds and Notions from within himself*."

Elsewhere he writes, "It may seem the Moon had some principal Place in the Figure of his Nativity: for the Moon was never in her Passion or Eclipsed but he was surprised with a sudden Fit of Fainting. . . ."

These statements indicate that Francis Bacon was a "Psychic" of no ordinary type. "Notions within himself," "faintings" or trances, and planetary influence are all sure signs of a highly tuned sensitive. An incident in France as a youth evinces his psychic nature quite as clearly as his private "Sonnet-Diary" tells of night visions, the astral plane, the aura of the etheric body, clairvoyance, telepathy, trance-control, angel guidance and even belief in reincarnation. He dreamed that his home in Gorhambury, "The Temple" was plastered with black mortar suggestive of mourning for someone. A few days later he received word that Sir Nicholas Bacon had passed away on the day of his dream. He records the story when an old man, noting how he had been surprised by the connection, naturally so, because he also states that as a mere child he had been led to consider the possibility of thought transference through witnessing the tricks of a juggler which seemed to be beyond mere sleight of hand.

During his stay in France he undoubtedly contacted psychics, occultists, etc., during his symbolic twelve months' sojourn in "Damcar" where he met "the wise men of Arabia," i.e. the Hermetic writers, Rhazis, Avenzoar, Averroes, Avicenna, whom he quotes in his open works as well as in his anonymous Dramas. He joined hands with the Mysteries and framed his Rites and ceremonials on those practised in Egypt, Babylon and Lost Atlantis. He goes the esoteric way of Amen Ra, Heraclitus, Orpheus and Plato because he is really more concerned with the soul of man than with his body.

All this "other-worldliness" is really the natural result of the "peculiar shades of the prison house—his environment—upon the growing boy" from his tenderest years. As a child born in "York House or York Place" (i.e. Whitehall), he played on sacred ground that reeked with the mysteries of the famous Knight Templars whose animated dust still throbbed in the old Templar Chapter House near the Strand. It is not generally



known to-day that between the old "Leycester House and the dividing wall of the city was a large area forming the centre and residence of the Knight Templars" in the old days, then occupied by the ancients of the Temple. He was reared a stone's throw from the ancient Temple where he would see—as we can to-day—the effigies of past Crusaders who once engaged in a Holy War.

When he was about three years of age, Sir Nicholas Bacon began to build himself a new country seat at Gorhambury near St. Albans, regarded to-day as the birthplace and cradle of Freemasonry in England by Masonic tradition. It is of profound significance that this home was named "The Temple," and was built out of the very ruins of St. Albans Abbey originally erected in the eighth century by King Offa and the Hond Masons to the memory of St. Alban martyred about A.D. 303. The ruins were quite near to the site of the new home. Young Francis would not fail to see the mysterious Marks of the operative Masons on the very stones of his home. One can imagine how his curious mind would be stirred and stimulated into activity in this ancient operative centre. They would cry out their ancient history. Indeed it is easy to believe that this association of historic incidents would so impinge itself on his psychic nature that it would create a desire to resurrect the Masonic Craft in symbolic form as in the latter parts of the "Instauration" (i.e. Revival or Resurrection).

Everything in his boyhood conspired to stir him into activity so that, says David Lloyd (1665),

"At twelve his industry was above the capacity, and his mind beyond the reach of his contemporaries."

When we reflect that his contemporaries were scholars like Philip Melancthon, Agrippa, D'Aubigne, Thomas Bodley, James Crichton, etc., we can assume that he was proficient in the languages of his four leading contemporaries. . . . Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French . . . so that he was exceptionally fitted to create, virtually, the English language with the new words provided through the pen-name of "Shake-speare" with his 20,000-word vocabulary.

In an age when Royal authority frowned on anything approaching psychic phenomena—witchcraft—Francis Bacon had to be extremely careful regarding any direct avowals concerning personal psychic experiences. In the "Shake-speare" Plays, however (veiled by his Mask), he could speak with a certain amount of freedom about supernormal happenings, but literary critics have long been at variance whether the author actually believed in the reality of "Spirit-people" or whether the supernatural was introduced as a mere device to heighten the dramatic effect. Did "Shake-speare" really believe that Hamlet's father still lived after his assassination? And that Hamlet actually saw, spoke to and heard the astral counterpart of his dead father speaking to him as an objective form? Despite the phrase so often quoted that Hamlet's father had gone to "that bourne from whence no traveller returns," did the author, nevertheless, wish it to be understood that the dead man still lived; that communication between the two worlds was possible; and that the "poor Ghost" could, in very truth, influence human action vitally, as in the case of Hamlet? Did "Shake-speare" teach consciously "spirit-return" as Spiritualists teach it to-day? Did he know it as a truth or was it simply a piece of idle imagination tricked out with fancy?

There have never yet been any satisfactory answers to these searching questions chiefly because the real author of the Plays

is unknown—in hiding behind his Mask—to the majority of litterateurs, and his private opinions have never been known. Shaksper of Stratford never left any of his personal opinions on record either in writing or orally, and "Shake-speare the Author" necessarily had to camouflage his thoughts leaving it to the "Sons of Sapience" to determine his real meaning. Nevertheless, "Shake-speare" left a definite record of his views on these vital problems in his personal Sonnets . . . a Diary he kept in verse from youth to old age of his passions and emotions, "Shake-speare's Sonnets" that were published long after the death of Shaksper of Stratford, not in 1609 as is commonly supposed.

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# P O E M S

Fig. 1.

The Freemasons emerged from their hiding places in 1723 and let the world know of their existence officially. In 1723-25 Alexander Pope and Dr. Sewall published "Shakespeare's Sonnets" (the Benson Medley Edition). The above illustration is the headpiece from it,—a remarkable example of Masonic Symbolism. On the left is to be seen the Square and Compasses, the Mask, and the clasped book with the Palette and brushes. There is also the special Cross "T's" of the Knight's Degree. In the centre are the Three Principals hailing the Sun. At the back of the third figure are the initials "F.B." On the right side are the organ pipes indicative of the "New Organ," (Novum Organum) with the Cock and Serpent of the Higher Christian Degrees. These same symbols were afterwards used in the tail-piece of Dr. Peter Shaw's edition of Francis Bacon's works. They distinctly show the connection between "Shakespeare's Sonnets" and the "Great Instauration" of Francis Bacon.

In the original order of the Sonnets—before they were mixed out of recognition for publication—there is a Canto to Margaret of Navarre written when he was in France. He says:

"I haste to bed. . . . I look on Darkness which the Blind do see. . . . And then my Soul's Imaginary Sight presents thy SHADOW to my Sightless View. . . . You being like a Jewel hung in ghastly night making black night Beauteous." (Sonnets 50 xxvii)\*

Anyone familiar with the phenomena of clairvoyance is aware that many clairvoyants have to close their eyes to see the vibrations of the spiritual body. In this instance Francis Bacon let it be known that he is familiar with this fact. Though he is "blind" he still sees something which to the material world would be regarded as a mere "Shadow," but which is real. Quite clearly he lets his reader understand that he is acquainted with the truth that man has an etheric body as well as a material one—which can travel during sleep, "ghosts of the living" as they were termed by W. T. Stead. He actually suggests that Margaret's etheric body can visit him, that he can see her and that this counterpart of his sweetheart is like a Jewel of Fire, brilliant with the Aura of Light which the Astral Form emits, seen clairvoyantly.

\* The numeral "50" is the number of the Sonnet in the original MS order. The Roman letters denote the number of the Sonnet in the "1609 Quarto."



That there may be no mistake in his meaning he says pointedly in the succeeding Sonnet 52 (LXI),

"Is it thy SPIRIT that thou sendst from thee  
So far from home into my Deeds to Pry?"

which question affords quite conclusive proof that "Shakespeare" was aware of the dual body now possessed by man.

A little further in the Canto he touches on Telepathy (Sonnet 54-XLIV) and says that "Nimble Thought can jump both Sea and Land; As soon as think the Place where he would be;" and in the succeeding Sonnet (55-XLV) he says he regards his Thoughts as "Messengers" carrying Love Epistles between them.

These scant quotations prove the Author's familiarity with the fact that man possesses a spiritual body here and now, and keen spiritual senses, that can bring one *en rapport* with the finer vibrations of the Spirit World.

In Sonnet 116 (LXXXVI), he again lifts the veil that the reader may better understand his psychic knowledge based on practical experience. In this particular poem the Author is communing with himself, toying with the idea that he, Francis Bacon the lyrical Sonneteer, possesses a secondary personality—"Shakespeare the Dramatist." In the play of words he tells us something of the Secret of Shakespeare. He asks:

"Was it Shakespeare's Spirit that was by SPIRITS taught  
to write above a mortal pitch? . . . Did they give him aid?  
Or the Affable Familiar GHOST which nightly GULLS him  
with Intelligence?"

The word "Gull" is an old English word meaning "to Swallow." We thus get a perfect description of the Trance Condition, a phenomenon in which a living person's personal identity fades out through being gradually swallowed by an Unseen Personality, the "affable familiar Ghost" taking possession of the living body and manifesting a new and distinct personality. The trance medium is indeed swallowed with Intelligence, that Higher Intelligence of the affable familiar ghost—full of human love and sympathy combined with the loftiest wisdom—a phenomenon it has been my privilege to witness often during the last thirty-five years of psychic research. And so Francis concludes the Sonnet, having let us know that he is perfectly acquainted with what is termed to-day Psychic Phenomena, with the expression . . . "I was not sick of any Fear from THENCE," i.e. from the Spirit World with which he was familiar. We get, in short, a clean-cut statement which tells every student of the Occult that the Secret of Shakespeare's "Living Art" was based on Psychic Knowledge, and that his marvellous characterisation had its roots in the super-normal.

In order to clinch the truth that he was assisted by an Angel-guide he writes in Sonnet 146-CXII:

"What care I who calls me well or ill. . .  
You are my All-the-World. . .  
You are so strongly in my purpose bred. . .  
All the World besides me thinks you are DEAD."

That remarkable asseveration admits of no dispute. The Sonnet is addressed to a Being in the other World. He definitely knew of the reality of the Higher Life and that someone acted towards him as Guide, Counsellor and Friend. He not only knew that he was Immortal but that he had lived before. He believed in the doctrine of pre-existence for he declares he had seen the Pyramids in previous ages and that "Time" was an Illusion compared to man's immortal Soul.

"No, Time! Thou shalt not boast that I do change. . .  
Thy Pyramids to me are nothing strange. . .  
They are but Dressings of A FORMER SIGHT. . .  
We BEFORE have heard them told. . ."

This doctrine of Reincarnation is quite in keeping with the beliefs of all the great Mystics. We can therefore be quite certain that the "supernatural" in Shakespeare was not introduced to heighten a dramatic effect but was deliberately inserted that future ages might understand that the life beyond the grave was not a wistful dream but a glorious truth.

It was this conscious psychic knowledge that strengthened him to march breast forward when an old man, though his world lay in ruins, just as the same knowledge strengthened Jesus, Socrates and Joan of Arc. It gave him the Eagle eye which enabled him to resolve the Past and Present into one Eternal NOW and to prophesy as he did in the "New Atlantis" of the coming marvels that would enrich the Kingdom of Man through the conquest of Nature. These prophecies were not mere guesses but definite statements foretelling the advent of the telephone, wireless, the gramophone, aeroplanes, submarines, etc. It was this psychic sense which enabled him to ignore the ills that tormented him and to look forward confidently to a future age which would vindicate his name.

"He had an almost unaccountable faith," says Dean Church, "that his system would be understood and honoured greatly by posterity."

Of course! The "New Atlantis" or "The Land of the Rosicrucians" was the "Proem" to the Rituals of the Fraternities he had founded. On the Continent his correspondence shows that his friends were Rosicrucians, Theosophists, Mystics, and that in England his personal friends were Masons and Mystics. It was to these people that he bequeathed his secret Ethical Scheme, "the peculiar System of Morality veiled in Allegory and illustrated by Symbol."



Fig. 2.

This tail-piece is from the Collected Edition of Bacon's prose works by Dr. Peter Shaw, (1723). Note here the use of the symbols embodied in the headpiece of the Benson Medley Edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets. (see Fig. 1)

Francis Bacon's complete system was not, then, primarily intended to add to man's bodily comfort—as alleged by the Schoolmen—but it sought to educate him as a thinking human through providing him with the greatest literature that the heart of man has ever conceived . . . the Immortal Plays. Above all, the climax of his Philosophy taught that Man was a Spiritual Entity with God-like powers . . . a Brother among Brethren through a Father of Love who had made of one Blood all the Nations of the Earth.



# Mystics of To-day

by Alan W. Watts

DR. D. T. SUZUKI: THE SCHOLAR WHO MAKES  
LIGHT OF LEARNING

IT IS RATHER STARTLING to be asked by one of the greatest scholars in the world for your candid opinion on his work, and then to be listened to as if you, and not he, were the source of authority. But then, Dr. D. T. Suzuki is not an ordinary scholar; he seems far more interested in learning than in teaching, for when you go to visit him he has a way of telling you very little, but just enough to "draw you out" so that you finish by telling him what you wanted to know yourself. And at the same time he learns something from you, for what he learns does not necessarily depend on your intellectual or spiritual insight. He is humble enough and great enough to learn from anything, however mean, for his learning does not consist only in knowledge of books and philosophical systems. Certainly he is a scholar and a philosopher in the true academic sense; yet with his friends he prefers to talk about anything rather than philosophy, and I have seen him absorbed in playing with a cat while all around him raged an intense religious discussion.

For Dr. Suzuki's life and work is an intriguing paradox. All his labours are spent in expounding a way of life, which, by its very nature, it is impossible to express in words. Upon this way of life he has written a number of weighty volumes, and has translated and annotated a great portion of its ancient literature. To the great majority of people this literature is wholly unintelligible and so frequently do we find in it references to the futility of relying on words and letters of any kind in one's search for Enlightenment, that it is difficult to see the point of translating such great quantities of even this kind of literature. For Dr. Suzuki's work is concerned with a form of Buddhism known in Japan as Zen, and its message has been summed up in these words:

A special transmission of Enlightenment outside the Scriptures;  
No dependence on words and letters;  
Direct pointing to the soul of man;  
Seeing into one's own nature, and  
the attainment of Enlightenment.

Originally Zen was developed in China from a contemplative form of Indian Buddhism, but the practical Chinese mind transformed it into a way of *life* rather than a way of retirement from life. Zen—in Sanskrit *Dhyana*—is said to embody

that inexpressible secret which the Buddha discovered when he attained his Supreme Enlightenment, sitting one night under the famous Bo tree over two thousand years ago. This is said to have been passed on through a line of patriarchs until it reached a certain Bodhidharma, who brought it to China in the sixth century A.D.

What is that secret? To answer this question Dr. Suzuki has written at least six profound and learned books, and he himself would be the last to claim that he has revealed that secret in any one or all of them. For we can explain a number of things *about* that secret but we cannot explain the secret itself. In just the same way we may have ideas *about* life, but if we imagine that life itself consists in these ideas we shall be like a man who mistakes a menu for a banquet. Indeed, this secret is the secret of life, but this is not to say that it is to be found *in* life like a nut is found in a shell; rather we should say that it *is* life, which is to say that it is at once the most obscure and the most obvious thing in the world. Dr. Suzuki would say that when we drink a cup of tea or say "How-do-you-do?" to a friend, or take a walk down the street, in those very things we are participating in that ultimate mystery which is the goal of all philosophy and religion. What, then, is the use of searching in the dim and distant realm of metaphysical speculation and exotic cults for something which lies so immediately under our noses? As the

Zen poets themselves express it:

How wondrous, and how miraculous  
this,—

I draw water and I carry fuel!

Or again:

This very earth is the Lotus Land of  
Purity,

And this very body the body of  
Buddha.

Undoubtedly Dr. Suzuki understands the peculiar humour of his position, of writing so many volumes to explain something so entirely self-evident. At times, perhaps, his sense of humour gets the better of him, for I shall never forget the occasion when he was supposed to speak at the Queen's Hall on "The Supreme Spiritual Ideal." He arose and gently announced with an almost imperceptible twinkle in his eyes that he did not know what "The Supreme Spiritual Ideal" was, and proceeded to give a seemingly irrelevant but very entertaining account of his house and garden in Japan.





In some ways his secret is like the crock of gold said to be buried at the foot of a rainbow, for the more you pursue the rainbow's end, the faster it seems to slip away over the crest of the hill and behind the next clump of trees. It is always just one stage further on, and the moment you think you are about to catch it you suddenly find that you are as far from it as ever. It would be wrong to suppose that Dr. Suzuki's elusiveness is the trick of a charlatan who avoids giving the ultimate answer for fear it may be proved worthless. For he cannot give away the secret of Zen even if he wished; it is something which each must discover for himself. It can no more be passed on from one person to another than you can eat another man's food for him. Yet one always feels that Dr. Suzuki has something of the imp in him, for just as one thinks he is about to reveal the whole tremendous truth one is met by silence and the most engaging smile. Just the same thing will be found in his books, for in a very special and salutary sense they are unsatisfying books. From the first pages to the last there is something which eludes one the whole time, and its very elusiveness makes the search for it more tantalizing, for as soon as the book is finished one feels as if it were a detective story with the last chapter missing. There is something at which he always hints, a mystery which time and time again he almost explains, but just at that moment one thinks the solution found, it disappears and the chase begins again. It is rather like trying to cut a ball-bearing with a knife; the harder you press, the faster the ball jumps away to one side. In Dr. Suzuki's own words: "When Zen commits itself to a definite system of philosophy there is no more Zen. Zen just feels fire warm and ice cold, because when it freezes we shiver and welcome fire. The feeling is all in all as Faust declares; all our theorisation fails to touch reality. But 'the feeling' here must be understood in its deepest sense or in its purest form. Even to say that 'This is the feeling' Zen is no more there. Zen defies all concept-making. That is why Zen is difficult to grasp." For just because Zen is something essentially living it is impossible to pin it down to any fixed and rigid formula. It has been said that to define is to kill, and if the wind were to stop for one moment for you to catch hold of it, it would cease to be wind. The same is true of life. Perpetually things and events are moving and changing; we cannot take hold of the present moment and make it stay with us; we cannot call back past time or keep for ever lost sensations. Once we try to do this all we have is a dead memory; the reality is not there, and no satisfaction can be found in it. In the words of a Zen master we must always "Walk on," never attempting to turn life into death by grasping at it in order to keep little bits and pieces for ourselves. Hence Dr. Suzuki says again: "The truth is, Zen is extremely elusive so far as its outward aspects are concerned; when you think you have caught a glimpse of it, it is no more there; from afar it looks so approachable, but as soon as you come near it, you see it even further away from you than before. Unless, therefore, you devote some years of earnest study to the understanding of its primary principles, it is not expected that you begin to have a generally fair grasp of Zen."

In that last sentence is another aspect of Dr. Suzuki's character as of Zen itself, and that is the element of severity. For beneath its humorously elusive exterior, there is a terrific and relentless sincerity. For example, Dr. Suzuki has a way of ending the chapters of his books which at first sight may seem no more than a joke. He works up his theme to a point where the reader expects

the final explanation, and then clinches the argument with a story like this: A disciple asked Zen master Suibi about the ultimate secret of Zen. "Wait until there is no one around," said Suibi, "and I will tell you." A little later the two were walking in the garden and the disciple said, "No one is around now. Please tell me, master, about the secret of Zen." Pointing to a bamboo Suibi said, "How tall that bamboo is," and to another, "How short that one!" At this point the chapter concludes and we are left "in the air." Is Dr. Suzuki pulling our legs? No, he assures us that a story like this is full of the gravest consequences, for if the disciple does not grasp immediately the point of the master's answer he may get a smack on the face or be lifted off his feet and thrown out of the room. For Zen literature consists almost entirely of stories like this, stories which baffle the intellect and leave one nonplussed. But that is the very technique of Zen, for its aim is an alertness and spontaneity of being which nothing can upset. In setting these weird conundrums the master is simply trying to find out whether his disciple is really alive, and if he is not he will not hesitate to knock some life into him with a stick. A master saw some birds flying overhead and asked his disciple what they were. "They are wild geese, sir." "Where are they flying?" "They have flown away, sir." At that point the disciple received a sharp tweak on his nose. "You say they have flown away," shouted the master, "and yet they have been here from the very beginning!" We might try to explain this story by saying that the disciple's nose was tweaked because he failed to grasp the eternal moment. The geese are here for a second and then they are gone, but it is no use having regrets about them when they are here no longer. You may look back ruefully at the moment when an opportunity has been missed, feeling that time has flown away. But while you look back it is still flying away from you and leaving you further behind than ever. Hence the tweak on the nose to bring you back to your senses, to make you alive to the moment. For life exists only in the moment, and while we stop to cogitate, to have regrets for the past or fears for the future, we miss it. Yet here again, the second we stop to explain the story of the geese we lose its essential truth. The geese do not wait in the air to be explained, and unless we can understand them in the moment as they fly and then never look back, we shall have our noses tweaked. For eternity is in the moment just because the infinitely great is the same as the infinitely small. You can never find the moment, for before you can shout "Now!" it has gone. Yet, paradoxically, you find it by not trying to keep it as it passes, by moving forward spontaneously with it. One might say that the second you stop to find time you lose it; you can only keep it by not stopping to find it. As any musician knows, keeping time is spoilt by any kind of hesitation. Dr. Suzuki explains, therefore, that Buddhism is, as it were, a philosophy of time, giving us another hint of his secret in this way: "Zen permits no ossification of each moment. It takes hold of each moment as it is born from Emptiness. Momentariness is therefore characteristic of this philosophy. Each moment is absolute, alive and significant. The frog leaps, the cricket sings, a dew drop glitters on the lotus leaf, a breeze passes through the pine branches, and the moonlight falls on the murmuring mountain stream."



# History

by the Editor



R. H. G. WELLS AT THE British Association meeting, Nottingham, the other day, said some things about the teaching of history in our schools that badly needed saying. All the same, we doubt whether the system which Mr. Wells might substitute for the present one would necessarily be an improvement. Many people look upon history as a cut-and-dried record of facts, stretching no further back than 1066 and no further into the future than the starting prices for to-morrow's three o'clock. Yet every individual is history. Very few of us, driven into a corner, could keep up a flow of speech and ideas for two minutes without recourse to what we have seen, heard, and known; and that is history. The stellar distances hurled about by mathematicians mean just as much to some people as the comparatively tiny figures by which we measure the age of recorded history. Many minds cannot even conceive of what is implied by the Renaissance or the Middle Ages, whilst to speak about the Roman Empire is to tax the imagination to breaking-point. Yet it appears to me that without a flexibility of mind which easily appreciates the fluidity of history, all school history is nonsense. If the compulsory memorising of Shakespeare succeeds in alienating for good any latent liking for good literature, the foolish system of teaching history by the memorising of dates is no less futile.

History is not art or science; it is an added sense. Factually, of course, it is a sheer impossibility. The well-known story of Sir Walter Raleigh looking from his prison window on a street brawl is sufficiently true in a general way as to be incontrovertible.

The great interest in history is the perversion of it. Could we be convinced in our youth that history is that which we are taught at school, all interest in it would evaporate. All said and done, it is not possible to deceive a child; he is protected from the illusions and the lies of the present by an intuitive memory of the past that guards against fraud. Apart from the impossibility of any two people seeing a given circumstance in the same light, there is the kind of error that is deliberate, the willing self-deception of the hypocrite, and the smug complacency of the little Englander against which facts and reason are equally helpless. And school history is a composite of every conceivable kind of error. It would be a brave man who would declare that he knows the real causes of the last great war if he rested his case upon one or a small group of so-called facts. The "scrap" of paper was mere moonshine; the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo was also moonshine; the "land fit for heroes" promised to the men who held the lines in France was still more moonshine. All of these things are politics, and politics are moonshine. History, as it is written for general consumption is politics, and is therefore moonshine. History, Napoleon reflected, is a fable agreed upon.

An analysis of the average history book would show that it is composed of the biographies of kings and accounts of battles. The lives of the kings are set forth according to the language in which the history is written; the victories and defeats are coloured by the same brush. But the very word "history" is too loosely

used. There are histories of Astronomy, Literature, Science, Music, Art,—of every human activity, whilst Mr. H. G. Wells even had the temerity to write a "History of the World." So, in the very nature of things, the record of events which we call "History" has a very restricted scope. And if we carry our examination of the history books a little further, we shall find that they are full of errors on matters of plain fact. Almost any modern schoolboy would answer "Columbus" to the question, "Who discovered America?" But Columbus did not discover America. He merely rediscovered it. Every American and every Greenlander is fully aware of the fact.\* Of particular interest to students of mysticism and the occult are the garbled historical versions of the lives of Cagliostro and St. Germain, to say nothing of Bacon, and countless others.

We should be justified in accepting as an accurate representation of historical fact the picture which at one time hung in Westminster Palace. It portrays the alleged meeting between Wellington and Blucher at La Belle Alliance. The painter was Maclise and he had the full sanction of the Committee of Fine Arts, whose President was the Prince Consort. The President personally assured the artist that the data on which the picture was founded was in all ways authentic. Yet how could the meeting possibly have taken place at La Belle Alliance? The Duke of Wellington in a letter to a Mr. Mudford (dated June 8th, 1816) says: "It happens that the meeting took place after ten at night in the village of Genappe, and anybody who attempts to describe with truth the operations of the two armies will see that it could not be otherwise. . . ." But even the Duke's statement is not correct, for Blucher himself did not get any further than Genappe, some ten miles or so from the battlefield; the French did not abandon it until nearly midnight. In any event, the Duke of Wellington contradicted himself some time later when he supplied Dr. Gleig with material for the biography in which he says he met Blucher at Maison du Roi!

About half the witty things for which Talleyrand took credit were actually said to him by others. For instance, *Qui ne l'adorerait? — Il est si vicieux*, was said not by Talleyrand of Montrond, but by Montrond of Talleyrand. Those not appropriated to himself were fastened on to him by wits anxious to put their wares in circulation. One such is the phrase attributed to the minister in *Nain Jaune*: "speech was given to man to disguise his thoughts." The real author was Harel, who, when his eighteenth-century wise-cracks caught on, immediately reclaimed them! In the sphere of *mots* our French friends are prolific. The grandiloquent *La garde meurt et ne se rend pas* attributed to Cambronne at Waterloo was denied by him. Despite the denial the town of Nantes was authorised by the State to inscribe it on his statue. The phrase was by Rougemont, a manufacturer of *mots* like Harel, and it was printed in the *Indépendant*.

The witty, piquant, blasphemous, wise, base, lofty, and

\* See also Mallet's "Northern Antiquities"; Rafn's "Antiquitates Americanae," and Charles Kingsley's Essay "The First Discovery of America."



other brands of "last words of the dying" are of no value. Some may be true, but the majority should be discounted. Goethe may have cried for "more light," but we doubt it. Chesterfield's "Give Dayrolles a chair," Pitt's "My Country, oh, my country," Socrates' "Krito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius; discharge the debt, and by no means omit it," are perhaps characteristic, but they lack the ring of probability.

The flying rumours gather'd as they rolled;  
Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told,  
And all who told it added something new,  
And all who heard it made enlargements too;  
In every ear it spreads, on every tongue it grew.

It would not be wise to discredit historical incidents merely because more than one version exists. Yet it is quite clear that we can never know the truth about a great deal that passes for history.

In the past, kings and battles were the principal subjects of history books. It is only since the beginning of the present century that the life of peoples as distinct from people have crept into the historical foreground. And when the present phase in its turn shall have passed away to give place to the story of the development of the soul, we shall have evidence of the emergence of truth. But the old objective history was at best a half-hearted affair. I know of no reliable history of corruption; none of theft, of coercion, blackmail and arson. And such things do not necessarily belong to the dark ages. We are taught history in such a way that, compared with the large view, our knowledge is mere parochial politics. Our details are too many and too few. They lead a small sect to perpetuate the memory of the worthless Charles at the expense of the great Oliver, and to find excuses for the piggish Henry VIII. Indeed, history is now so universally regarded as worthless in the orthodox sense that the psychologists have let themselves loose on it. They are writing detailed accounts of some of the accepted heroes and inserting among a great deal of imaginative effort a few hitherto overlooked facts. This is a good sign, for it is an admittance of the inadequacy, if not of the falsity, of established history. But this line of research will be as abortive as the deliberately perverted variety, for one great fact is always overlooked and that is the ever-changing quality of human nature and attributes. Dr. Stein's recent articles show very clearly the truth of this statement, and until we hold it firmly in our consciousness we shall think of Charlemagne, Rabelais, Mano Capeç, and the rest in terms of John Smith, and that, we clearly cannot do.

Spencer, whose thinking on most things strikes me as being much clearer than Huxley's, had a great deal to say about history, albeit on this subject he was verbosely diffuse. "Were someone to tell you," he wrote, "that your neighbour's cat kitted yesterday, you would say the information was valueless. Fact though it may be, you would call it an utterly useless fact—a fact that in no way could influence your actions in life—a fact that would not help you in learning to live completely. Well, apply the same test to the great mass of historical facts, and you will get the same result." That was well said, but he then goes on to tell us how history *should* be written, and we can only conclude that the cure would be worse than the disease. He would have history tell of Church and State in parallel lines, the correspondence between the two, an account of ritual, ceremonial, creed and whether the beliefs expounded were really lived. He would have us informed of the control exercised by one class over another "as displayed

in social observances,—in titles, salutations, and forms of address"—what a boring prospect,—together with an indication of the relations of parents to children. Next would come a table of superstitions "from the more important myths to the charms in common use." Then would follow a delineation of the industrial system; the intellectual condition of the nation should in its various grades (*sic*) be depicted; an account of the progress made in science and the prevailing manner of thinking. The degree of æsthetic culture, as displayed in architecture, sculpture, painting, dress, music, poetry, and fiction should be described. And lastly, "to connect the whole, should be exhibited the morals, theoretical and practical, of all classes. . . ." A prospective historian of this present age would have a little difficulty in carrying out these recommendations. Who could decide with anything approaching accuracy the degree of æsthetic culture to-day? And above all, who could honestly estimate our "prevailing manner of thinking?" And what constitutes the various grades of a nation's intellectual condition? Anyhow, what constitutes an "intellectual condition"? History, rightly understood, is more akin to poetry than to statistics. Spencer's idea of history smells of the surveyor's office. In order to collate all the information he requires to be recorded as history, we should require whole armies of clerks, and there are far too many clerks as it is.

Buckle, towards the close of the last century was the high-priest of what we may term materialistic history. He admitted the difficulty of our getting on intimate terms with individual men of ancient days, but he thought it easy enough to contact the masses! As James Anthony Froude pointed out, Buckle agreed to disagree about the characters of "Julius or Tiberius Cæsar, but we could know well enough the Romans of the Empire. We had their literature to tell us how they thought; we had their laws to tell us how they governed; we had the broad face of the world, the huge mountainous outline of their general doings upon it, to tell us how they acted." He did not believe with Emerson that history is the biography of a dozen great men. "With them or without them, the course of things would have been much the same." Such a view of history takes John Smith as the universal norm, and is an impossible view. Buckle would have us believe that without Jesus and Buddha, Alexander and Napoleon, Beethoven and Abraham Lincoln, we should be exactly as we are, a reflection that did not deter him from attempting an alteration of our views on history!

History is writ slow and large over the family of man. If we cannot make sense of our present condition it is because we stand in the middle of the sentence. Men have not always been as they are; they have been neither better nor worse, they have been different. Their faculties, aims and relationships have had a different expression. But that fact alone will not bring us nearer to a grasp of history; we must take into account climate and even geological shiftings. We have already seen that America was discovered by Norsemen. Following Mr. Spencer's hint, what is the present prevailing manner of thinking about these Northern countries and their inhabitants? The Iclander is looked upon as being little better than a savage, certainly as an *ignoramus*. Such a view is not only mistaken, it suggests an incapacity to appreciate the contemporary world. How then can one hope for an impression, let alone a grasp of history, much of it covering a time of which the factual historians know nothing and care less? Those Norse ancestors of ours were great men. They overran all Europe, and time was when Greenland produced wheat of the



finest quality. Their stalwarts were supplying the body-guard of the Byzantine Emperor; they composed the once famous Varangers of Constantinople. Their influence and conquests extended to England, Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Greece, Palestine, Sicily, Africa, Russia.

We have no real appreciation of the outward, let alone the inward way of life of the old Norsemen. How then can we hope to understand our forebears of still more ancient days? The great stumbling block, since the middle of the last century, has been the Darwinian theory, the very acceptance of which, no matter how tacitly, has by its nature inhibited the historical sense. Important in a way that cannot be gone into here, is the difference between B.C. and A.D.,—nevertheless, we feel that the institution was a fatal one to the development of the true historical sense in the average man. B.C. means little to him; at best it was a nebulous period in our history in which men and women wandered about in white robes; at worst, it was an era of savagery. Carlyle enquires which was the more important personage in man's history, he who first led armies over the Alps, and gained the victories of Cannae and Thrasymene; or the nameless boor who first hammered out for himself an iron spade? Even at school we are impressed by certain periods of history with which the factual records have simply nothing to do. I remember, when quite small, being caned for the tears I shed at the story of Joan of Arc, and the keen disappointment I felt when first I read Anatole France's *Jeanne d'Arc* which at Shaw's Saint Joan turned to disgust. Shakespeare and Goethe alone appear to have the infallible sense for History. Was it not Marlborough who declared, when asked for the source of some statement on English history, that the only history he read was Shakespeare?

A curious thing is that we do not need to pose as occultists in order to "get a line" on history. If we alter the impressions gained in youth we do so at the expense of truth. Alexander, Jesus, Charlemagne, Joan, together with many before and after are not so much persons as epochs, living milestones in the soul's wanderings. When, with Mr. Buckle, we begin to imbue them with the characteristics of John Smith we have once again lost the way. And so we begin to classify the contemporary and the eternal men of history, for she too, as Carlyle advised us, has her artists and her artisans. It was a good job of work that the Encyclopædists, that Hallam, Macaulay, Gibbon and Montesquieu have done for us; they served us well enough with their noses to the ground when what we wanted was a telescope. If we understand Hannibal aright, Haig's despatches would make exciting reading; once we are clear of cobwebs on the subject of Bounaparte, the *Eroica* is more full of meaning. The history of the Church, rightly written, would perhaps give us a greater portion of the whole than can our histories of this and that. The accounts of our explorations of blind alleys are humourless things, no bright sprite enlivens these tombs of ill-considered effort, and the day is to be dreaded that will bring us a history of psychology. The middle way, followed at our poor best may be well enough for you and me, but no such liberty of careful, slow-thinking tread can be accorded to those who make history. They must come heavily leaded and with a dangerous list to left or right. A modern Napoleon would not get as far as the first consulate did he stop to ponder on complexes, and a modern Beethoven would certainly never reach the ninth symphony were he to consult a pedestrian analyser of his baby-talk. The great ones who in themselves were epochs were burning up with something that must be put into

speech or action which in time became the impulse of their own and succeeding eras.

From a consideration of epochs we are led to civilisations. The one in which the scales are just beginning to drop from our own eyes is probably the first world civilisation; its predecessors were more or less local affairs. The local ones lasted roughly 1,500 years each. A friend who knew Steiner told me the other day that the great Austrian mystic was doubtful whether this civilisation would last the century out. It is a doleful prospect, but one which is shared by many thinkers who lay no claim of access to super-sensible phenomena. The more timorous of us may find some little hope in the possibility of a world civilisation having a longer life than a local one however difficult it may be to found such a proposition in logic. We are in danger of becoming smug. And let it be said at once that adherents of mystical and similar sects are probably the smuggest of all. An example is that of a reader of this journal who wrote me a letter full of pious advice on the dread karma I was preparing for myself by virtue of saying what I felt to be true about the cult of the psycho-analyst! The gist of the advice was that in occult circles criticism of anybody and anything is taboo. We have only to remember the treatment of Steiner, Blavatsky and the rest to wish it were true! This is the kind of hide and seek which in late years has caused the childish splits in practically every existing mystical community. Such an attitude engenders the whispering-gallery and ends up with the venomous libels which constitute the conversation of the class-meetings in the village tin chapel.

We live in a mad world. A deep-thinking Dutchman, J. Huizinga, some two years ago wrote a remarkable book, *In the Shade of To-morrow*, an excellent summary of the spiritual distemper of our times. The very first chapter has a gloomy title, *Apprehensions of Doom*, and in it he says:

Everywhere there are doubts as to the solidity of our social structure, vague fears of the imminent future, a feeling that our civilisation is on the way to ruin. They are not merely the shapeless anxieties which beset us in the small hours of the night when the flame of life burns low. They are considered expectations founded on observation and judgment of an overwhelming multitude of facts. How to avoid the recognition that almost all things which once seemed sacred and immutable have now become unsettled, truth and humanity, justice and reason? We see forms of government no longer capable of functioning, production systems on the verge of collapse, social forces gone wild with power. The roaring engine of this tremendous time seems to be heading for a breakdown.

The reply that "things have been as bad before" is both false and cowardly. They have been nothing of the sort. Even Buckle knew that there was complete truth in the ancient bards and troubadours, such as we never know to-day. Huizinga again:

With the growing worthlessness of the spoken or printed word consequent upon its ever greater distribution which the progress of civilisation has made possible, the indifference to truth increases in direct proportion. . . . The immediate publicity engendered by commercial interests and the craving for sensation inflates simple differences of opinion into national hallucinations. The ideas of the day demand immediate results, whereas the great ideas have always penetrated very slowly. Like smoke and petrol fumes over the cities, there hangs over the world a haze of empty words.

Left to itself, it is highly probable that our civilisation will die from a surfeit of its own medicines. We pride ourselves on our free-will, a possession that is somewhat of an illusion. We



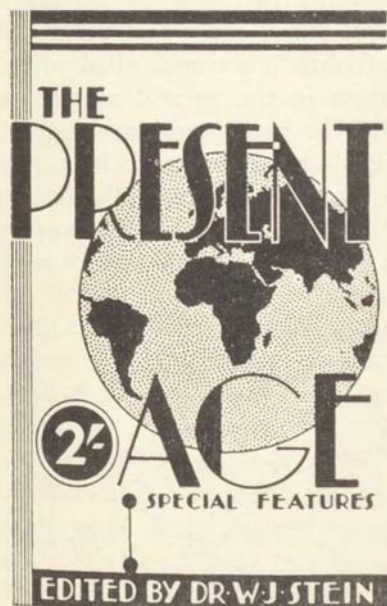
have it all right, but it has been atrophied by a nodding acquiescence to the hypnosis of alleged "progress." Our history has led us to the present impasse; empirical scientific thought has arrived at a point from which it can go no farther; criticism, so-called is a farce; poetry and music are divorced from spirit, reason and nature; modern sculpture is a hissing and medicine a by-word. Our sense of values is infantile and our use of language insane. Newspaper contents-bills would disgrace a savage: *Romping Through Physics* and *Hallelujah, I'm a Bum*, are the titles of recent books representing science and autobiography respectively.

We have seen that factual history is totally unreliable and affords us no clue whatever to an understanding of the causes of our present bewilderment. We know that by a spiritual recognition of epochs and their impulses we can arrive at some appreciation of the ancient civilisations and the meaning of their destiny. When we have got our historical legs we can in some measure perceive the meaning of Lemuria and Atlantis. From that, it is one step to a recognition of their end. Lemuria perished by fire; Atlantis by water. . . . Will the first world-civilisation be destroyed from the air?

The view that it will be is not necessarily pessimistic, for we should seriously enquire whether it be worth saving. If it is, the necessary impulse must come from the mystic. The words "mysticism" and "occultism" must be regarded as no longer serviceable; their facts must be infused into and absorbed by objective empiricism. The days of blue-stockings musings over the parlour fire are gone; so too are petty factional warrings.

Freemasonry and other "secret" societies have served their purpose; it is time that their history and aims became accessible to the plain man and their symbols translated into action.

Throughout the world there are probably not more than a handful of occultists attempting serious research, and unless we are given evidence to change our opinion, we suggest that among occultists the lone figure of Mrs. Kolisko is the only one to-day actively making a contribution to the history of occult science, and that under financial conditions woefully inadequate. The layman's hope for long years has lain in science, and science has failed him. It is an opportune moment to turn his attention to occult, spiritual science. The hundreds of letters we have received from people who declare that they have been surprised to see in print some of the things which they secretly believed or hoped to be true represent a tangible, however small, hope for the future. We are fond of preening ourselves when an objective scientist offers confirmation of an occult truth. It is possible that this civilisation will be saved in spite of us; against such an eventuality let us be sure we shall recognise the man or the woman who will speak the word that may mean deliverance, and be not too disappointed if the name does not appear in the membership records of our occult societies. Such an irony would be perfect compensation for our present time-wasting sin of wrangling about personalities which in any event are beyond our complete comprehension, instead of sinking the petty differences which should be beneath our notice and getting on with the supreme task of the century.



## The New "Present Age"

EDITED BY W · J · STEIN (Ph.D.)

"The Present Age" has already won a place for itself among the higher class journals which aim at an interpretation of the mundane and physical in terms of the Spirit, which is only another way of saying that its viewpoint on current affairs,—the happenings of to-day,—is original, necessarily individual, and will appear to some, extremely controversial.

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# The Gateway of the Moon

by John Seeker

**W**HAT WE HAVE HITHERTO achieved in the course of these studies has in fact been none other than to penetrate into the spiritual background of the ascendant of birth. For as we saw in working out the pre-natal horoscope of Richard Wagner, the ascendant at birth, or the descendant as the case may be, indicates the place at which the Moon stood at the beginning of all those pre-natal events in the Cosmos which we have been considering.

Yet we must also be able to look at the whole matter from the other side, in order to perceive what is important spiritually. Shortly before birth the human soul undergoes the final phases of descent into the earthly world. It clothes itself with the three bodies or vehicles. This is the essential fact of the passage through the Moon-sphere, immediately before the actual entry into the Earth-sphere. To begin with, there is the pure soul and spirit of the human being, the essential Ego having already clothed itself in a body of soul-forces,—generally called the “astral body.” Then at a definite moment the soul seeks connection with the physical germ provided by the parents. Conception then takes place. About this time the human soul—being as yet only partly in connection with the embryo—forms for itself an etheric body from the surrounding cosmic ether, as modern supersensible research reveals. All these events are very much related to the Moon. The soul must wait, so to speak, until the moment when the Moon is at a particular place in the Zodiac, answering to the inner requirements of the soul itself. Only then can it enter upon its way into the Earth-sphere, gathering to itself the etheric body which it needs. This moment coincides with the beginning of the “pre-natal constellation,”—in Richard Wagner’s case the 15th August 1812. Thence there unfolds the whole course of the pre-natal events among the Stars, dominated by the approximately ten circlings of the Moon through the Zodiac. It is a cosmic archetypal picture of the etheric body which is now taking hold of the physical embryo, forming it through and through, making it the bearer of a life-history that is to unfold in Time.

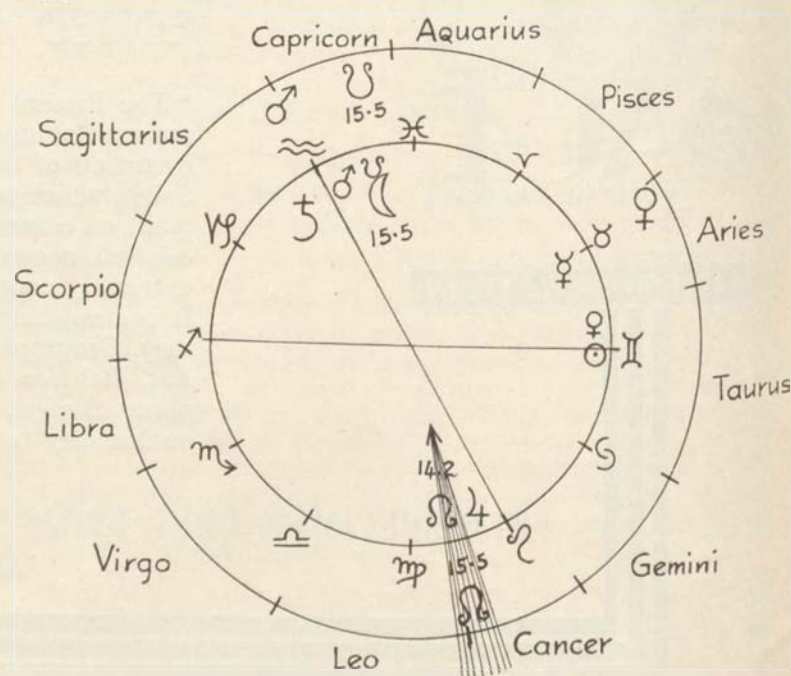
Again and again we must lay stress upon the fact that the point from which the *Moon* begins in this progressive “pre-natal horoscope” becomes the ascendant or descendant at the moment of birth. Take Wagner’s case once more. On the 15th August 1812 the Moon stood at the beginning of the constellation of Scorpio, about 1° in the sign of ♏. At the moment of birth this point is in the descendant—the place where the Western horizon meets the Zodiac. The opposite point, in the constellation of Taurus, is therefore in the ascendant at birth. Now in Astrology the highest importance is attributed to the ascendant. In estimating the horoscope of a human being, ever so much is made to depend upon it. In doing so a host of rules are applied,—rules that have grown more and more voluminous in course of time. Often one has recourse to the quite external, empirical data. But one is no longer really able to see through into the under-

lying spiritual facts, and of the human being’s connection with the Cosmos little more is left than a sum in arithmetic which is more likely to depress than to uplift him.

Above all, we must bear in mind that the essential home of Astrology is in the East and that it originated in a period of time when an instinctive, dreamlike clairvoyance still existed, which within certain limits is even still to be met with in the East. This dreamlike power of perception, in its prime, certainly needed no compendia of rules to help it in unravelling the cosmic script when looking up into the starlit Heavens. Mysteriously, to the men of old, the Stars made known their cosmic truths.

The gateway to this kind of knowledge is for the most part closed to Western man. He must go other ways to penetrate again to the spiritual world. Wrestling his way through all the discipline of scientific thought, he must at long last make his way to the realities of the spiritual world that are behind the outward facts and phenomena.

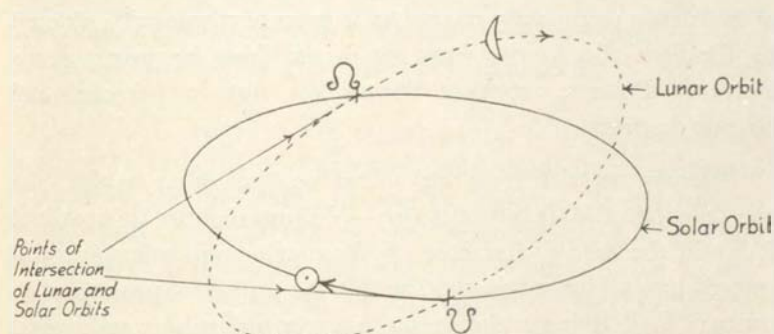
We have here tried to go at least a little step along this path. In so doing we have seen that behind the ascendant or descendant at birth there stood the Moon at the beginning of the “pre-natal horoscope,” and that thenceforward there was unfolded the very rich and manifold picture of the pre-natal Lunar cycles, which in their turn were a reflection-in-advance of the whole stream of the man’s life and destiny in time. Thus the whole range and conception of the “ascendant of birth” becomes filled with a qualitative reality having its origin in the great Universe,—a widely extended plastic picture of the man’s spiritual affinities, which we can now learn consciously to understand. It is quite true that some of our descriptions were hardly more than a bare sketch and outline, but in the further course it will be possible to supplement them, so to round off the picture and make it more real.





Now just as we can penetrate in this way to the spiritual essence of the ascendant of birth, so too it will be possible with regard to the other components of the horoscope of birth. The position of the Moon in the Heavens at the moment of birth is as it were a key, nay more, a gateway to the secrets of the soul-nature of man. That this is so, was already indicated in our first article, and it will now be explained in greater detail. Let us then call to mind once more Richard Wagner's horoscope of birth.

The Moon is in the constellation of Capricorn, or in  $15.5^\circ$  of the sign of  $\text{♑}$ . To understand what the Moon in this position signifies, we must in a certain sense go *through* the "gateway of the Moon." We do so by considering the relation of the *Lunar node* to the Moon at birth. The Lunar node, quite abstractly speaking, is the point of intersection of the Solar and the Lunar orbits. There are therefore two nodes, in opposite positions in the Heavens,—an "ascending node," generally represented by the sign  $\text{♈}$ , and a "descending node," with the sign  $\text{♏}$ . The Solar and the Lunar orbits, in effect, are not in the same but in different planes, enclosing a certain angle. Thus there arise the two opposite points of intersection,  $\text{♈}$  and  $\text{♏}$ .

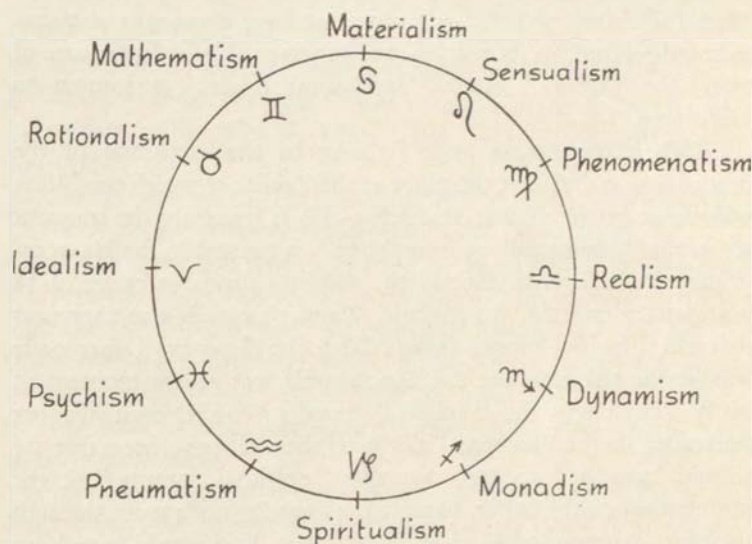


Now the peculiarity of these two points of intersection is that they do not stand still, but slowly move. The plane of the Lunar path rotates, so to speak, in relation to the plane of the Solar path; so the two nodes move round. They move around the Zodiac in a contrary direction to the rotation of the planets,—i.e. from Aries backward through Pisces, Aquarius, etc. A complete revolution of a Lunar node takes place in 18 years and 7 months; after this time, therefore, the node—the ascending node, for example—is once again in the same position in the Zodiac as it was before. The ascending node is therefore the mathematical point at which at any given time, and again after 18 years and 7 months, the Lunar orbit rises above the Solar orbit, while at the opposite point, the descending node, it sinks below it. Concerning this fact, behind which a very significant spiritual reality lies concealed, we shall have more to say in the sequel.

In Richard Wagner's case the Moon at birth stood at  $15.5^\circ$  of the sign of  $\text{♑}$ . At the same time the descending node stood at  $14^\circ 12'$  of the same sign,  $\text{♑}$ . Since the node travels backward through the Zodiac, we see that it must have been at  $15^\circ 30'$  of  $\text{♑}$ —the position of the Moon at the time of birth—shortly before birth, namely about the end of April 1813. There was at this time a definite constellation in the Heavens,—of great importance for Richard Wagner. Venus came into the constellation of Aries, while Mars, approaching the sphere of Capricorn, was at the same time in quadrature to Venus. In the above drawing, this constellation is recorded in the outer circle.

Mars and Venus were of especial significance for Wagner's life; we can for the moment leave out of account the other planets.

The question now is, what can this constellation tell us about the human being? We have already indicated that it has to do with the forming of his world-conception, his philosophy of life. In the spiritual symbols of the Zodiac and of the planetary world we have to look for their relation to the manifold philosophies that are possible to man on Earth. Rudolf Steiner did this in his remarkable lecture-cycle, *Human and Cosmic Thought*, wherein he discovered the following relations:



The twelve tendencies here indicated may be called the different kinds of philosophy or shades of philosophic outlook. But there are also seven philosophic *moods*—qualities of feeling—connected with the seven Planets:

- Gnosis = Saturn
- Logicism = Jupiter
- Voluntarism = Mars
- Empiricism = Sun
- Mysticism = Venus
- Transcendentalism = Mercury
- Occultism = Moon

It is possible for example for a human being in an earthly life to develop "Spiritualism" very strongly in the Gnostic mood. (Spiritualism, needless to say, in the philosophic sense of the word, not in the sense of modern "Spiritism"! ) In cosmic terms we shall then say that "Saturn" for this human being is in "Capricorn." Such will then be his spiritual nativity, as against the nativity of ordinary Astrology.

In Rudolf Steiner's descriptions it was not directly indicated, nor was it recognisable to begin with, whether this "constellation of the cosmic philosophy" had any relation at all to the actual horoscope of birth. All that revealed itself at first sight was that the horoscopes of birth seemed in no way to indicate such a connection. Moreover Rudolf Steiner had expressly stated that this constellation of the cosmic philosophy might happen at some time *before* birth or even *after* it. It was only after long empirical investigations that the truth emerged, namely that this "spiritual nativity" is connected not only with the actual events in the external Cosmos but also with the individual's horoscope of birth,—connected in the way we have now indicated in the example of Richard Wagner. This discovery, taken together



with all the facts of the "pre-natal constellation," leads us at last to an harmonious and total picture of the connections of the human being as a whole with the Universe. In the horoscope of birth we have the cosmic counterpart of man's entry into the *physical* world. In the "pre-natal horoscope" or "pre-natal constellation" we have a cosmic picture of the *etheric* organisation,—of the whole way in which it takes hold of the physical and forms it. While in the "constellation of the cosmic philosophy" there is given us a picture of the *astral*, the psychological or psychic-bodily structure, which finds expression most of all in the innate tendency and direction of a man's philosophy. Therefore in this form of Astrology we have also a way of access to the threefold, in its real essence supersensible bodily nature of man—the physical, etheric and astral bodies, as known to Occultism.

When the Lunar node (it may be the ascending or the descending node) is at the place in the Zodiac at which the Moon will be at birth, or was at birth,—this is precisely the moment when the "philosophic constellation" is present in the Heavens. It may be before or after birth, within a probable range of 18 years and 7 months. In Richard Wagner's case it was very near to birth; only a month before birth the *descending* Lunar node was at the place where the Moon itself was at the moment of birth. Then was the "spiritual nativity" of Richard Wagner portrayed in the Heavens. Yet it might well have been that we should have had to look for this "spiritual nativity" at the moment when the other, namely the *ascending* node went through the place where the Moon stood at birth. This would have been approximately nine years and three months before or after the moment we have actually fixed on,—the end of April 1813. We see therefore that variations are possible—in this instance, three—and that we must be well acquainted with a man's psychology and spiritual character in order to choose rightly among the possible alternatives. Herein there is indeed an element of liberation. This spiritual horoscope cannot be merely calculated; a quality of freedom still prevails. The way is opened out into a kind of Astrology in which it will no longer be possible to look for the connections of man with the Cosmos by dint of mere calculation; it will be necessary to develop a sensitive inner feeling for the deeper character of the man concerned.

In Richard Wagner's case, in the "constellation of the cosmic philosophy" we have Venus in Aries and Mars passing from Sagittarius to Capricorn. The philosophic tendency thus indicated would therefore be:

Idealism in the mood of Mysticism,  
Spiritualism in the mood of Voluntarism.

(Experience with these constellations has shewn that for the philosophic *moods* the actual constellations rather than the signs of the ecliptic are important.) The two aspects are not unrelated; they are in quadrature  $\square$  to one another. In judging horoscopes of birth, quadrature is rather known as a hindering, disturbing factor, but in the processes we are here dealing with the conditions are reversed. In the spiritual horoscope the "bad" aspects are good, while the "good" are often hindering. This too was indicated by Rudolf Steiner and experience confirms it.

In a beautifully clear way the above aspects are revealed in Wagner's spiritual creation,—in the whole tendency of his world-conception. Already at an early stage he begins to take the mythological themes of Norse and Germanic legend. There is a

divination of this even in *Tannhäuser*. With an astounding growth of inner mystical experience he advances along this line. Often the dramatic poems are there for a long time beforehand; only much later the music that belongs to them is added. So he advances—to indicate it only very briefly—through the experience of the Siegfried myth in the *Ring of the Nibelungs*; through the death-in-love in *Tristan and Isolde*, having its roots in the Celtic spiritual sphere; to the highest, the experience of salvation in *Parsifal*. Experiencing in an inner, mystic way his own destiny of life, there arises in his soul the drama of the *Flying Dutchman*, seeking his home and his salvation. In the *Siegfried* drama we have a picture of the battle of the awakening I-consciousness with threatening powers of darkness. In *Parsifal* we have the unfolding—dimly felt as belonging to a more distant future—of the will-to-healing which lies hidden in the depths of his own being. In mystic depths, Wagner discovers the formative and creative cosmic powers of the Universe, even as they are at work in his own destiny,—the archetypal Ideas as it were, reaching even down into the life of individual man. He fashions them into his works of art. In his creations therefore, there lives the essence of Mysticism (intimately related as it is to Mythology), coloured by Idealism. So in the form of *cosmic Ideas* he portrays the Universal Powers, working themselves out in personal and historic destinies.

Herein we also gain an access to the other aspect, the constellation of Mars in Capricorn—Voluntarism in Spiritualism. It lay in the whole character of Wagner's soul and spirit and entered into all his work, that he felt the universal process as an entity of Will, living and moving in a spiritual sphere and undergoing transmutation in the realms of spiritual Hierarchies. Though he had also difficulties to contend with, so that this picture of the world grew to no more than a dominant feeling in his soul, yet was it living in him; it represents the fundamental mood of his artistic life-work.

It is of course very difficult, when speaking of philosophic tendencies and world-conceptions in this regard, to formulate things easily and tersely. For the conception of "Idealism" or of "Spiritualism" for example must be taken from pure Philosophy,—not from the many popular variations or conventional meanings. There is a very great difference between what is commonly called "Idealism" in daily life and Idealism philosophically understood. In the above mentioned lecture-cycle, *Human and Cosmic Thought*, these purely philosophic concepts are worked out, and represented above all in their sequence, their evolution one out of another, following the dynamic course of the Zodiac. It is not possible to describe all this in detail here.

From the little that has been said about the "constellation of the cosmic philosophy" it will already be recognised what a tremendous significance this "spiritual horoscope" must have for man. For in effect it represents the dominant soul-spiritual motives and motifs which in a high degree will govern his whole course and character of life. Indeed in some respects it is even more important than the horoscope of birth. We shall have more to say of it in the sequel.



# The Magi and the Star

by Robert E. Dean

**I**N AN AGE WHEN GODS AND MEN were on the most familiar terms—when the character of one furnished a transcript for the other and when each consented to act a reciprocal part towards elevating, honouring and glorifying the other, the birth of a god or a messiah was as a matter of course regarded as an event of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the great ones of the earth and even that of the dwellers in heaven.

Hence we find it not only related in the story of the Christ Jesus but in the histories of several of the wise men and Saviours of antiquity that at their birth they were visited by other "wise men from a distance," or Magi, as they were called by the Persians and Brahmins. At the birth of Confucius (598 B.C.) "Five wise men from a distance came to the house, celestial music was heard in the skies, and angels attended the scene." (The Five Volumes).

Krishna (1200 B.C.), the eighth avatar of India, was visited by angels, shepherds and prophets, and gold, frankincense and myrrh were also presented to him as offerings. It is related of Pythagoras (600 B.C.) that, his fame having reached Miletas and neighbouring cities, men renowned for wisdom came to visit him, and in the Anacalypsis we are told that "Magi came from the East to offer gifts at Socrates' birth, also bringing gold, frankincense and myrrh." Not only these, but Mithra and Zoroaster of Persia and Osiris of Egypt were visited by Magi at the time of their birth.

There was also current among the ancients the fixed belief that the birth of gods and great personages were always announced by a star or stars. The birth of Buddha was announced in the heavens by an *asterism* which was seen rising on the horizon, and it was called the "Messianic Star." The planet Jupiter figures at the birth of Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu, and when Krishna was born his star was pointed out by Nared, a great prophet and astrologer of the time.

A certain star was prominent at the time of the birth of Yu, the founder of the first Chinese dynasty, and a star is prominently mentioned in the account of the birth of Laotsze, the Chinese sage. A brilliant star shone at the birth of Moses; it was seen by the Egyptian Magi, who hastened to inform the Pharaoh of the fact. According to Rabbinic tradition, when Abraham was born his star shone prominently in the heavens, and a brilliant star which eclipsed all others was also to be seen at the birth of the Cæsars. The birth of Ali, Mohammed's great disciple and the chief of one of the two principal sects into which Islam is divided, was foretold by celestial signs; even in the New World, the symbol of Quetzalcoatl, also a virgin-born Saviour, was the "Morning Star" under which he had been born.

It is interesting to consider these matters in the light of present-day scientific knowledge, particularly the Biblical account of the star-guided journey of the Wise Men of the East to Jerusalem and thence to Bethlehem in search of the Babe.

The Gospel according to St. Matthew (2: 1-12) relates that at the time of the birth of Christ Jesus there came wise men (Magi) from the East to Jerusalem to inquire after the newly-born King of the Jews, that they might offer him presents and worship him. A star which they had seen in the east guided them to the place where the infant Messiah was, and, having come into his presence, they presented him with gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh.

It has been urged that the use of the two words, "his star," by the Matthew narrator was and is a complete justification of astrology; that the first intimation of the birth of Christ was given to the Magi, worshippers of Ormuzd and admitted to be renowned astrologers, and that from these *heathen* the first tidings concerning it were received by his own countrymen at Jerusalem—therefore the theory which connects great events in the lives of men with celestial phenomena must in fact be sound and worthy of credence.

Yet, in refutation of this claim it has been asked why, if the Magi knew that the star which they saw was the star of Christ, they were brought first to the city of Jerusalem? Why did it not guide them straight to the village of Bethlehem, and thus possibly prevent the Slaughter of the Innocents? Why did the star desert them after its first appearance, not to reappear until after they had issued from Jerusalem? Or, if it did not desert them, why did they ask of Herod and the priests the road which they should take, when, by hypothesis, the star was ready to guide them?

Be that as it may, the original interpretation or explanation of the Biblical account of "The Wise Men and the Star" by orthodox theologians coincided in general with that which would be accorded it to-day by any reasonably well-informed person who read the account with due attention.

Some supernatural light resembling a star appeared in some country far to the west of Jerusalem to men who were versed in the study of celestial phenomena, and conveyed to their minds an overpowering impulse to travel to Jerusalem, where they would find a new-born king. The individuals to whom this light appeared were priests of the Zend religion, and expected a Universal Saviour in the person of the infant soon to be born.

It may be parenthetically stated that a firm conviction had been long present in the East that about the beginning of that Era a great and victorious Prince, the Messiah, was to be born (Lucan, i, 529; Sueton, *Caes.* 88; Seneca, *Nat. Quaest.* i, 1; Josephus, *War.* vi, 5, 3; Servius, *Ad Virg. Ecl.* ix, 47; Justin, xxxvii, 2; Lamprid, *Alex. Sev.* 12), and his birth was connected with the appearance of a star. Calculations led the astronomers and astrologers of Mesopotamia to determine the advent of this Messiah in the latter days of Herod, and the place of his birth to be in the land of Judaea. (Tacit. *Hist.* v, 13; Sueton, *Vesp.* iv.)

On arriving at Jerusalem, after diligent inquiry and due consultation with the priests and learned men, who naturally could best inform them, the Three Wise Men were advised to proceed to Bethlehem. That they thought a star led them is



clear from the words "... for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." The star which they had followed to Jerusalem reappeared and preceded them, and finally remained stationary over the place where the young child lay.

The whole matter was supernatural, and evidenced a divine pre-arrangement whereby, even in lowly birth, the child Jesus was honoured and acknowledged by the Father as his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. And so the humble shepherds who kept their lonely watch on the plains near Bethlehem, together with the greatest philosophers of the East, were alike the witnesses and partakers with the angels of the glory of Him who was born in the City of David—a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.

With no hint of sarcasm, and with no reflection upon the literal belief of any sincere individual, it can nevertheless be shown that conjecture has combined with the daring of infidelity and the cold research of modern science to cast doubt upon certain details involved in this well-known story of the Magi and the Star.\*

The Star of the Magi has been displaced from the category of the supernatural, and has been referred to the not unusual astronomical phenomenon of a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn. This explanation, or idea, originated with Kepler (A.D. 1571-1630), who hoped that by definitely identifying the conjunction of those planets as the Star of Bethlehem accurately to determine the difficult and obscure point concerning the Anno Domini.†

Kepler's suggestion was worked out by Dr. Ideler, of Berlin, and the results of his calculations do at first glance indicate an accordance with the phenomena of the Star in question. For it is known with certainty what celestial phenomena occurred with reference to the planets Jupiter and Saturn at a date admittedly not far distant from what modern calculations prove must have been the date of the birth of Christ, and they can be examined in an effort to determine how far they fulfilled (or failed to fulfil) the circumstances as stated by the author of the Book of Matthew.

During the month of May, B.C. 7, a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn occurred not far from the first point of Aries, the planets "rising" in Chaldea (the East) about three and a half hours before the sun; they were also in conjunction in the constellation Pisces (the astrological Sign of Judaea) in the latter half of the Year of Rome 747, and were joined by Mars during 748.

Jupiter and Saturn came together in the constellation of the Fishes (at the 20th degree) on May 20th; Jupiter then passed by Saturn towards the north. About the middle of the following September they were, near midnight, both in opposition to the Sun—Saturn in the 13th and Jupiter in the 15th degree of Pisces—being in fact distant from each other by approximately one and one-half degrees. They then drew even closer together. On the 27th of October there was a second conjunction, in the 16th degree of Pisces, and on the 12th of November there occurred a third conjunction, in the 15th degree of the same sign.

In the last two conjunctions the interval between the planets amounted to no more than a degree, and to the unassisted eye the rays of the two bodies were intermingled and they appeared

as one magnificent star. It is to be remembered that they were in conjunction three times, came very near together (as celestial distance is measured), and showed themselves thus throughout the night (in those countries) for several months.

These conjunctions could not fail to excite such masters of astronomy and astrology as the Magi—the Wise Men of the East. The truth of the matter is that, partly in consequence of their knowledge of the prophecy of Balaam and the widespread belief then prevalent that some Great One was shortly to be born in Judaea, they began their famous journey to Jerusalem.

Presuming that they set out at the end of May (the time of the first conjunction) upon a journey which, from our knowledge of the conditions and circumstances of the time, would seem to have required at least seven months, they observed that the planets slowly separated until the middle of July; becoming retrograde, they again came into conjunction by the end of September.

At that time Jupiter itself presented, in so clear an atmosphere, a magnificent spectacle. It was then at its most brilliant apparition, for it was at its nearest approach both to the Sun and to the Earth. The glorious spectacle continued for several days, when the planets slowly separated, came to a halt, and assuming a direct motion, Jupiter again approached the conjunction with Saturn just as the Magi may be supposed to have entered Jerusalem. About an hour and a half after sunset the two planets could be seen from that point, appearing as one great star and apparently suspended over Bethlehem in the distance.

The phenomena just described are unquestioned, as an ephemeris of the planets Jupiter and Saturn and of the Sun from May through December of B.C. 7 has been calculated, as have ones for the same period during the years B.C. 6 and B.C. 4, and the phenomena in question appear at first glance definitely to fulfil all the conditions of the Biblical Star of the Magi.

Details in regard to the exact system of astrology practised by the Persian Magi are lacking, but the question arises as to whether or not, solely upon astrological grounds, they undertook the lengthy seven-months journey. It is known that during February of B.C. 66, a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn also occurred in Pisces, and was even closer than the one of December 4th, B.C. 7 (Pritchard, in "Transactions of the Royal Astronomical Society," Vol. XXV). If astrological reasons alone impelled the Magi to journey to Jerusalem in the latter instance, similar considerations should have impelled their fathers to make the same journey fifty-nine years before. However, there is no record of their having done so.

Even supposing that the Magi did really undertake the journey from Persia to Jerusalem and Bethlehem at the time in question (May-December, B.C. 7), it appears impossible that the Jupiter-Saturn conjunction of that time could under any normal circumstances have fulfilled the conditions of Matthew 2: 1-12 for the astronomical and geographical circumstances would have made a real miracle necessary in order that they might do so. We will briefly consider these facts.

On the 4th of December the sun set at Jerusalem at five p.m. Supposing the Magi to have then begun their journey from that point to Bethlehem, they would first have seen the Star (the conjunction of Jupiter-Saturn) one and one-half hours distant from the meridian in a *south-eastern* direction, and thus decidedly to the east of Bethlehem itself. By the time they reached Rachel's Tomb, the Star would have been due south of

\* This is "slippery" ground and will be discussed in our next issue.—ED.

† See works of Steiner.—ED.



them on the meridian and no longer over the hill of Bethlehem, for that village bears from Rachel's Tomb S.  $5^{\circ}$  E.  $8^{\circ}$ , or S.  $13^{\circ}$  E. Leaving the Tomb of Rachel, the road takes a turn to the east and ascends the hill near its western extremity. The Star, therefore, would have then appeared on their right and a little *behind* them; it must have ceased to go "before them" as a guide.

Arrived on the hill and in the village of Bethlehem, it became astronomically and so physically impossible for the Star to "stand over" any house or any point near them; it was visible, beyond the hill to the west, but far off in the heavens at an altitude of  $57^{\circ}$ . For as they advanced, the Star would have of necessity receded before them, and could hardly "stand over" any point less than several miles distant. A star, if vertical, would appear to stand over a house or object near the spectator, but a star at an altitude of  $57^{\circ}$  could not appear to "stand over" an object in the immediate neighbourhood of the observer. It is scarcely necessary to add that if the Magi had left the Jaffa Gate (of Jerusalem) before sunset they could not have seen the planetary star at the outset, and if they had left at a later time the star would have been even a more useless guide than has been outlined.

Some Chinese astronomical tablets indicate that in the Year of Rome 750, which has been accepted by some as the year of the birth of Christ, a comet appeared in the heavens and was visible for seventy days. Some authorities are of the opinion that the first conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn excited and fixed the attention of the Magi, and that their guiding star was this comet.

Another theory is that the Magi may have seen a *stella nova*, a star which suddenly increases in brilliance and then as suddenly fades away. However, it seems that these theories all fail to explain how "... the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." The position of a true, or fixed, star in the heavens varies at most but one degree each day; no star could have so moved before the Magi as to lead them to Bethlehem, and neither fixed star or planet could have disappeared, re-appeared, and stood still. Under the circumstances, one may choose between two explanations.

The Star of Bethlehem may have been a truly miraculous phenomenon. It may have been like the miraculous pillar of fire which stood in the camp of Israel at night during the Exodus (Ex. 13: 21), or similar to the "brightness of God" which shone around about the shepherds (Luke 2: 9), or like "the light from heaven" which shone round about the stricken Saul (Acts 9: 3); for "... with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19: 26), and "... if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9: 23).

Or, being born in a miraculous manner, as other great personages had been, it was necessary that all the miracles attending the births of those individuals and virgin-born gods and Messiahs should be added to the history of Christ Jesus; otherwise the legend would not be complete. There is just as much evidence sustaining this latter view, if not more so, than sustains the former.

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# Individuality and Social Community

by Dr. Walter Johannes Stein

**T**HE CULTURAL EPOCH OF THE ROMAN and Greek evolution did not conclude when Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor of Rome left his post, because the great impulse of this epoch reached out beyond that moment. Christ appeared as a human being in this epoch and we can well understand that mankind could not assimilate at once such a great event. The gospels are written in Greek and the distribution of the Christian religion all over the earth was done by Roman means, but it took more than a few centuries to elaborate or revivify the whole culture of antiquity by permeating it with Christianity. It was not until the Renaissance period that we can consider the Roman Greek cultural epoch to have expended itself.

The great task of the Oriental evolution, which flowered in logical form in the Greek culture, was to elaborate in the most exact way the individuality of the human being. We have seen this exemplified in our brief study of the history of Alexander the Great. But to imbue this personal impulse with Christianity took some centuries, and so we find that the stories of the Greek epoch appear again and again in the early middle ages. We find further that nearly all the writers of the early and even later middle ages in all their poems, and all their romances, repeat more or less consciously, stories, legends and myths of the Greek and Oriental world.

For example, when they speak about Tristan they call him another Theseus; when they speak of Morholt they call him a second Minotaur. And so it seems that not only in the Renaissance period, but even in that ribbon of time between the appearance of Christ on earth and the 15th century, antiquity was repeated. But it was done in such a way that Greek philosophy, having had the great task of giving all the cosmic wisdom to the individual, now appears as the means of sublimating such individual wisdom into love. So the great romances, the great love stories, and the love songs appear and show us in a beautiful way how wisdom can be turned into love.

Personality was introduced by individualising wisdom, and that was the last epoch before Christ. Personality was turned away from the selfish side into selflessness by the repetition of this last step of the evolution of antiquity, and by the penetration of this last step by Christianity, and so love appears as the great gift given to mankind by Christ himself. Certainly love was not unknown before, but it was not such a personal love, it was not the love uniting one individual with another individual.

A consideration of the centuries immediately following the birth of Christ shows us humanity engaged in a great struggle. The great force of individuality had been acquired but had not yet been fully penetrated by the selfless impulse of Christianity, and so we see mankind appearing in all stages between selfishness and selflessness.

All the great educational stories of the Middle Ages show us more or less this struggle going on within the social system.

Two things were unknown to antiquity, natural science and social problems. Natural science in a modern form was not there because nature was not known to mankind in the same way as it is apprehended to-day. Antiquity could see gods and other spiritual forces working in all the phenomena of nature. It was not before the human individual became lonely, and considered soul and spirit as possessed only by human beings, that nature appeared as something without soul and without spirit. And it was not before the human being discovered the existence of the individualised soul and the individualised spirit in other human beings that the social problem could be born.

Natural science and the prolongation of its technique and the social problem go together and belong to the epoch when the human being reached individualisation, but had not fully penetrated individualistic powers with selfless love. When mankind approached this step of evolution gold began to play an important role. Gold can be taken as a symbol of force used by the individual. In ancient times gold was used to create beauty or to express divine power. Gold coins were not created by the state or even by the king as king. The first gold coins appear as being issued by the high priest of the Sun God. Darius the Persian king employed gold coins in such a way. This gold coinage, the Daric, is not named after him, but derived from a Persian word meaning "gold." He issued these gold coins not because he could do so being the king, but by having the power of the high priest of Oromazdes, the Sun God. Gold was more or less connected with priesthood and religion, but when mankind got beyond this stage and had fully evolved the forces of personality, gold appeared no longer as a symbol of divine forces. Money had no longer the meaning of divine and religious powers, but was used for selfishness and a desire to be mighty for one's own self. We find that the Roman empire was in this stage at the moment when the young Germanic people crossed their frontiers.

The people from Gallia had the great desire to win gold and when they came into Rome the only thing they wanted was gold. As soon as they had it by conquering the capital they turned back. We must understand that the Germanic culture of this time had not evolved to the stage of having money, but the Roman culture was an elaborated economic body and used money to a large extent. It was not only the great pressure of the Mongolian peoples upon a younger people, younger tribes located in Hungarian camps, but it was also the great admiration that these young tribes had for Roman gold that made them cross the Roman frontier. We have to imagine the great event of the wandering of the people in the 4th century after Christ as being brought about by these two forces, one which pressed them, the Germanic population, into Europe and which started from Mongolia, and the other a force which, sucking them from the South, made them burn with the great desire for enrichment. This Germanic population soon began to feel that the possession of gold was not only desirable but was also connected more or less with a curse, and we will not find in any other population



this knowledge which was very soon expressed in myths and legends that gold is desirable but carries with it also a certain evil force which may drive us into great mistakes and difficulties.

We soon find this idea expressed in Germanic mythology. Gold on earth being visualised as the same as Loki in heaven, and the Germanic Loki is no one else than Lucifer, or if you like, the devil. The stories of the Edda already tell us this, tell us how Loki approached the dwarf Andwari. He appeared in a changed body as a fish but Loki caught him and wished to have all the dwarf's gold in his possession. The story told in this early legend shows that the one who wanted to possess gold did not even wish to leave one single piece to the original owner, and so the dwarf when he was told that he had to deliver up everything he possessed said: "You must leave me one ring which gives me the power to change my form, to appear as a dwarf, or at another time as a fish, you must not take the possibility of making all these metamorphosis of forms away from me." But Loki did not like it and he wished also to possess this ring, and then the dwarf spoke his curse, and practically the whole of the old Germanic mythology is the story of this curse: or we might even say the story of this curse is still the story of Europe.

We find that other mythologies, for example the Greek mythology, is more or less a happy mythology. The Homeric gods possess humour, they are not only smiling, they are even laughing. But when we turn to the European mythology we find the myths to be penetrated with great sorrow. We find all the great heroes and warriors of Europe tragic heroes.

When we look to Siegfried for instance and his great and important story it ends with the betrayal, and his being killed. The dark Hagen appears transfixing the shoulders of young Siegfried with his spear. When we ask why this is, why these Germanic heroes appear in such a tragic way, we can see that it is because all the other mythologies, all the other peoples were created before mankind had approached the full evolution of personality, whilst the population of Europe, especially of Northern Europe, awoke later, created their myths like dreams of their own evolution late, at a time when they were in the stage in which the single personality had just evolved. And when this stage was accomplished, then egoism, the Loki, the forces of evil on earth, hate and jealousy, play their part.

We should be wrong in thinking that European peoples were inferior to the rest of the world's population merely because the latter had myths and legends more connected with beauty and happiness. We must look at it in another way and understand that it is this force awaking late, and thrown deeply into the earthly bodily conditions of the evolution, there to evolve quite consciously personality which creates these tragic ingredients of the European evolution. Even in the word Europe this is indicated, because the word Asia means "Land of the Gods of Light," and we translate this word "Land of the not incorporated Gods," the Asuras. These gods of light give Asia her name. But the word Europe means "embodied." And the different people living in Europe indicate the different ways of incorporation in the body. That we have in Europe so many nations means that there are many ways of using bodily organs. There are some who are especially gifted in the use of the eyes, creating the great painters. Others are more connected with another sense organ, the ear, and give birth to great musicians, and so on. All the different ways of using the bodily organs could be shown in a highly differentiated evolution of the Euro-

pean people, but one thing is common to them all, the knowledge that they all have their spiritual origin in the dim far distant past when they were not living on European soil, but when they were still living in the Atlantean continent.

They make no reference to this Atlantean continent by such name as Plato does in his dialogues, but they are speaking of their far distant home country in which there was fog in the air, in which no rainbow appeared, and they have a feeling that all the water which created this great fog in "Fog Home" as they called the land, "Nifelheim," that all this water held in suspense in the air at that time came down at last, and is now in the main the rivers of the European continent. By looking to the Rhine or to the Danube they felt that in the waters of these rivers their own mythological past re-appears to them, speaks to them and tells of their origin in a far past when another nature was ruling. The word "Rhine" is a Greek word, it is not a German word. It comes from the Greek word Rheo, which means flowing, so it is really river. In the same way as the English call the Thames not Thames, but the London river, so the Germans call their great river, by an old Greek word, because when they turn to look back to the old Atlantean past, they use their Greek consciousness. So the dwarfs, the nymphs, the beings living in this river are the last remaining gods of the old Atlantean epoch.

And then their mythology tells how Loki became strong, how egoism began its work, and what the human being can do to overcome it. The Edda and the Nibelungenlied unfold this. So we can understand that the great problem of this European people was: is it possible to go safely through this stage of loneliness in our personality? Is it possible to keep all the great value of the personal forces, but at the same time to evolve side by side with it certain far reaching connections which are able to bind together soul and soul? Is it possible to build groups in which the single personality can serve. Through all their myths and legends, and even through modern life goes this great ideal: "How can the strongly evolved personal force serve the community?"

We can understand that when such a problem appears, Loki and other forces, enemies of the human evolution, can work strongly. And how is it possible to meet them? That is the great Germanic question. We find the European population at first ruling in tribes, in groups of blood relationship. This is very similar to the stage of evolution shown to us in the Indian epic, the Bhagavad Gita. All nations go through this stage and when they reach the full evolution of the single personality the old tribes begin to disappear. The Bhagavad Gita expresses this when it says the casts will be dissolved when the old customs and the old traditions no longer go on and the single personality is taken as too important.

But just at the moment when this appears the nation becomes able to receive Christianity because Christ does not work in tribes, or in groups, who feel very strongly blood relationship, Christ is approaching the individual soul of the single human being. As long as blood relationship works strongly, as long as marriage unites related people who are more or less nearly related by blood relationship, so long can the pre-Christian gods appear. And when the blood relationship is disturbed by inter-marriage with other blood, foreign blood, then the old gods which are the gods of the racial forces disappear. This is indicated in the old Germanic mythology as the twilight of the gods. The gods appear to kill each other, and at last no god is left,



only one, the one god who never has spoken before, who had reserved his teaching and his secrets for the moment when the single personality should be evolved fully and will search in loneliness for a new aim. This one silent god is called Widar, and is nobody else than Christ. He alone can stand the twilight of the gods. But he can, so the story of the Edda tells us, create all the gods of the race anew, but now no longer from the forces of the blood, but from the inner relationship between soul and soul, and so everything which went down into decay when the personality was born will appear again as a new heaven and a new earth; as a new social order, when personality, now no longer bound to blood, but bound to the spiritual world itself, will approach a new social order. Two legends tell us about this twilight of the gods. One is the Edda, in which is developed the account of this great battle in heaven in such a way that all the members who take part in it are gods, Brunhilde, the Valkyre, Siegfried, not yet a man; we have Baldur, the sun god of light, Hagen, not mentioned as a man, but in his divine appearance as the god of darkness. But the second edition of this story published after Christianity had taken place in Europe is the Nibelungenlied and here every god is turned into a human hero.

We have to understand that the battle in heaven when all the gods killed each other and only the god Widar remained was when Christianity first came to an earlier world, came down so to say, from heaven to the earth, when personality was fully born, but had to develop through mistakes and betrayal which appear in the tragic figure of Siegfried. Now it is no longer the eclipse of the soul; it is the tragic figure of Siegfried. It is no longer the name of Loki, but in its place appears gold. This gold creates social disorder, and personality is not selfless enough to give up its private affairs. Instead Widar, who is mentioned in the epic poetry, appears on earth in the Nibelungenlied. Dietrich of Berne, the warrior, is also connected with another legend, the legend about the dwarf-king, Laurine. In this legend Dietrich appears as the only one who has no desire for gold. It is shown in this legend, which is preserved in the form of a middle ages German poem, that the dwarf king Laurine owns all the gold and precious stones in the world, and has the power to entrap the human soul which must live through her desire to be rich in an underworld in the depths of the mountains. Dietrich of Berne is shown as the one who does not have any such desire, and for that reason can free the Soul that Laurine has held in prison. And this great personality, who is not only a legendary figure, but is a real king, whose name was Theoderic, finds himself at the place where the story of the twilight of the gods and Widar, appears. He is the only one who is still alive, after the great battle on earth which reflects East and West, when all the different groups fighting for gold, have killed each other.

The Nibelungenlied is taken as a most important work of poetry showing us a battle just as important as the battle that was fought between the people of Troy and the Greeks. Paris, being the origin of this battle had decided for Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty. Here in the Nibelungenlied the position is given to Hera, to the goddess of power, who appears here certainly not under her Greek name, but her place is taken by Kriemhilde, the woman desiring the greatest power created by the possession of gold.

Most interpreters and commentators say the story of the Nibelungenlied is not true, because Kriemhilde and Brunhilde, and Gunther, the king are real personalities of the 5th century,

but Attila who is described there as a contemporary of them is not really a contemporary, and certainly Theoderic is so late that Attila and he, who are described as friends at the same royal court, have not even lived together. So they say, behind the Trojan war there is some truth, and Schliemann even, and others after him, could excavate the remains of this great war. Nobody ever will be able to excavate the remains of the great Nibelungen battle described in the Nibelungenlied. But this is not true because the great battle between East and West described in the Nibelungenlied is a prophecy and cannot be excavated, but will take place if mankind is not very careful. That makes the study of this poetry very important and it should have all our attention as it unfolds much for us who are looking towards the future just as the Greek Poetry described in the Iliad unfolds for us the past. It could be that one day in the Germanic evolution, Kriemhilde and a new Attila, repeating again the Mongolian evolution, marry each other, that a battle will be fought for a repossession of the gold, which is still connected with the curse, and which would inflame East and West all over the world. Nobody would remain, except such as should be like Theoderic or Dietrich of Berne, untouched by the desire to possess gold. In reality the events belonging to this Nibelungenlied are already extant. The marriage has already taken place, but the battle has perhaps not started yet, because the persons employed in this great dramatic play are more than contemporaries. The whole saga is sketched by a consciousness supremely able in painting these great events of history which stretch over centuries that are themselves such short moments, for events which start in our own days may go on for 100 years or more and still be considered as contemporaneous.

Many things could be learned from the Nibelungenlied. Here is Attila, the leader of the Mongols, well known to Europe because they have appeared three times, the first time 375 after Christ, under the leadership of Attila. The second time 1241 under the leadership of Jenghiz Khan, the third time just now, under the leadership of somebody who may not yet be born. But who is Attila who is the representative of the Mongols? We learn something about him from a Roman Ambassador who met him, and tells us the most extraordinary thing that he was quite the opposite of his people, who were strong headed warriors, whilst he was kind. Wherever he went there were women offering him fruit and wine. He appeared like the Greek scribe, Dionysos. He was modest. All his people used golden and silver chalices and cups whilst he used wooden chalices and wooden plates, so that the Roman ambassador (and this is not a legend, but real history) tells us that we can imagine Attila as a warrior if we like, but we must see him also as a most kind individuality filled with pity and love, but by sacrifice leading this great Eastern swarm over Europe by a hard kindness to awake Europe. We can find Jenghiz Khan in the same way, but it is already a repetition, and we do not yet know if we will be able to find in the one or in the other way for the third time the great Eastern rhythm which will send the waves of an awakening force over Europe.

In the Nibelungenlied Attila is described as the one who is more permeated by Christianity than anybody else except Dietrich of Berne. It is not so easy to understand such a figure as Attila who in history, was so opposite to the poetical idea which the writer of the Nibelungenlied imagined when he described him. But a strange thing happened in history with Buddha's



religion. It was not taken over so much by the people with whom he was living but mainly by the Mongols. Why? Their attitude, their customs are opposite to the Buddha's pity and kindness because they were the greatest warriors ever on earth. But why should love not incarnate where love is most necessary? This romance is a great question for the European evolution, and the Nibelungenlied for that reason shows us the problem. Will the West unite with the East when they need each other? The egoistic force of the gold will create a battle between East and West in which nobody will remain but the one in the West, Dietrich of Berne, who does not care for gold, and the one in the East like Attila, who does not take revenge when a Christian knight killed his son.

This story told in the Nibelungenlied is extraordinary because the son of Attila is killed when he sits with his father at table taking a meal, and when his head is cut off everybody expects that Attila will kill the murderer, but he jumps up and says he should be saved because he could see that it was not done with real purpose, he wanted to wound him but he did not want to kill him. Attila is not a Christian, but is he not Christian? Will Europe be able to recognise Christianity appearing in the East under other names than those in which it is generally accepted in the West? Will Europe realise that the gods who kill each other in the twilight of gods represent the very strongly armed group souls in the mythological sphere which still rule the world? When the day comes that East and West really meet, our task will be to deal in the proper way with gold and recognise the divine light and love wherever and under whatever name that it may appear.

Hagen at last gave back the gold to the bed of the Rhine realising that it was the cause of the curse. He took it away and gave it back to nature. He separated the forces of personality and egoism from gold. It is easier to indicate such a thing in a myth than to describe the necessary steps which repeat the same fact in economic life, but it is not impossible, and for this reason the next article will show how this problem appears when it is expressed in terms of modern life, and not in the mythology of the middle European people, which is half a prophecy and half a description of our present time.

#### CHRISTMAS—(continued from page 27)

by a consciousness of nationhood in which the individual sacrifices himself to his people without losing his value as an individual, and the peoples sacrifice themselves to humanity without abandoning their individual being and *raison d'être*. Such is the Christmas impulse of our time. The true attitude to nationhood must be developed, and then, once again, those who bring the sacrifices may gather around the manger. Gold, frankincense and myrrh must be offered up. Gold has always been the symbol of self-knowledge and true self-knowledge is sorely needed by the peoples of the Earth. It becomes true self-knowledge only by offering up in sacrifice the element that cannot live in the present of the Christ Impulse. Frankincense is the symbol of the surrender of the self, of selfless existence without loss of the self. For what could be offered by one with no self to offer? Myrrh is bitter. It represents the sufferings through

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which a people must pass while consciously adhering to the true path of development. The inner meaning of myrrh is self-perfecting, victory of life over death. Myrrh betokens continuity in the stream of the historical development of a people—the character of eternity within the temporal. Such are the kingly sacrifices.


And the gifts offered up by the shepherds—they too have changed. For the shepherds offer milk, wool and a lamb. They offer what Nature bestows upon them, and the kings the faculties which are the fruit of a man's work upon his own being. Our age too must make the shepherds' offering through the transforming of science, and the kingly offering through the changing of social conditions over the face of the whole Earth. Science is the storehouse of Nature's gifts to us—the gifts we garner in the form of the results of observation. But our very attitude to Nature must undergo a change. Modern man must feel himself responsible to Nature, to the Earth *as a whole*. As humanity we possess as much wheat as we allow to grow. We penetrate very deeply into Nature; we change the very climate, we transform the Earth herself. But are we willing to place what Nature bestows upon us in the service of the Christ, in the service of evolution as a whole? Are we handling these gifts of Nature in such a way that the result is chaotic or conducive to the healing of all peoples? *Knowledge* is necessary at every step. The kings are responsible for peoples; the shepherds for the Earth and the gifts of the Earth. Both the kings and the shepherds among us to-day must stand by the manger; both kings and shepherds must find their path by reading in the stars or by taking to their hearts the proclamation of angels.

This is the sense in which we are standing at the threshold of a new age. Legend in our day is prosaic, no longer clothed in the language of fairy-tale. Yet legend still whispers the warning that we must find our true path.—Let us seek the path to freedom, for he who leads himself to freedom is fighting on the side of the Spirit of the world. May we feel, within community, the power of our own being, and within our own being the purifying power of community. And then, neither the gifts of the Earth nor the sacrificial gifts of men will be wrested into the service of the opposing forces. If we *live together* with the Earth, *feel* with the peoples, *will* with humanity and *work* in the freedom of the "I" within us, then there will be born, in every nation after its own fashion and in accordance with its own nature, that which once again enables us worthily to celebrate the Christmas festival.



# The Birth Day of the Gods

by Thales II

 USEFUL AND USUALLY very definite clue concerning the original nature of a god or goddess is often provided by a consideration of the season at which his or her festival was originally celebrated. Thus, if the festival falls or originally fell at the time of the new or full moon, there is a certain presumption that the deity thus honored was either the moon itself or at least had lunar affinities. If the festival was held at the time of the Summer or Winter solstice, it can be surmised that the god was either the sun itself or bore some close relation to that luminary.

In the old Julian calendar, the 24th of December was reckoned the Winter solstice and regarded as the date of the nativity of the sun, for at the time of the Winter solstice the days begin to lengthen as the sun begins its journey northwards along the great ecliptic.

Osiris, the Sun-god of ancient Egypt, Chris of Chaldea, Krishna of India (an incarnation of Vishnu and the compiler of the sacred Vedas), Ch'ang-ti of China, Mithra, the Sun-god of Persia (mediator between God and mankind, whose personal life and cult bears many striking resemblances to that of Christ and Christianity), and the Greek god Adonis (whose name is an adaption of the Semitic form of address, "Adonai," meaning "Lord," and who is definitely identified with the Babylonian sun-god Thammuz), were all born on dates then corresponding to our present December 25th.

So also were Sakra of India (who corresponds to the great Indra himself), Dionysus of Greece (son of Zeus and Semole and from whom Alexander the Great is said to have descended), Jao Wapaul, a crucified savior of ancient Britain, and Jesus of Nazareth himself, all born on the then 25th of December—the time of the Winter solstice.

During antiquity the civilised nations of the world pictured to themselves the changes in the seasons as episodes in the lives of their gods, and celebrated their birth, death, and happy resurrection or reincarnation with alternate rites of rejoicing or lamentation.

At the time of the Winter solstice Osiris was the youthful Horus, the new-born sun itself; Krishna was born at midnight on the 25th of the month of *Savarana*, which corresponded to our December, and millions of his disciples and believers celebrated his birthday by the giving of gifts to friends and decorating their homes with garlands and gilt paper. Many centuries before the birth of Christ the women of Rome trod the streets on that date singing in a loud voice, "Unto us a child is born this day!"

The immense popularity of Mithra, the ancient Sun-god of the Persians, is shown by the many monuments erected to him and illustrative of Mithraism which have been found scattered in profusion throughout the old Roman Empire. Combining a solemn and impressive ritual with aspirations of moral purity and a hope of immortality, Mithraism proved a formidable rival

to Christianity itself. Indeed, the issue of the conflict between the two faiths for a long time hung in the balance.

Centuries before the birth of Christ the ritual of the Nativity as it was celebrated in Syria and Egypt, for example, was remarkable in its resemblance to our present celebration. Celebrants retired into inner shrines, for instance, from which they emerged at midnight of the Winter solstice with loud rejoicing as they cried, "The Virgin has brought forth! The Light is waxing!" Similar exclamations of the ancient Romans have already been referred to.

There is no doubt that the Virgin who was deemed to have conceived and brought forth a Son on the 25th of December was originally the great Oriental goddess whom the Semites themselves called "The Heavenly Virgin," or simply "The Heavenly Goddess." To them she was a form of Astarte, or *Ashtoreth*, of the Babylonians.

We are of course particularly curious in regard to the birth day of Christ himself, and the customs with which we now celebrate the event.

Biblical writers and commentators are strangely silent as to both the date and the day of the birth of Christ; in fact the early Christian Church did not celebrate the Nativity at all. In time, however, the Christians of Egypt came to regard the 6th of January as the date of His birth and the Adoration by the Magi, as well as the date of His later Baptism. Thus the custom of celebrating all these events on that same date was instituted and gradually spread, until by the end of the Fourth Century this particular date was well established in the East.

However, the Western Church had never recognised January 6th as the true date, and adopted December 25th, for reasons which they deemed advisable and will be later explained. In time this decision was accepted by the Eastern Church, and was instituted at the Church of Antioch during the time of Saint Chrysostom.

Why, then, did the Ecclesiastical authorities institute the Christmas (Christ Mass) Festival, and why did they fix it as of December 25th? Both these questions are definitely answered with great frankness by an ancient Syrian writer, himself a Christian, who says:

"It was a custom of the heathen to celebrate the twenty-fifth of December as the birth-day of the sun, at which time they kindled fires and lights in token of festivity. In these solemnities and festivals the Christians also took part. Accordingly, when the Doctors of the Church perceived that the Christians had a leaning to this festival, they took council and resolved that the Nativity should be also solemnised on that day, and the Festival of the Epiphany on the sixth of January. Accordingly, along with this custom, has prevailed the practice of kindling fires until the sixth."

This is confirmed by an unknown Syrian annotator of Barsalibi (*Assemani, Bibl. Orient.*, II, 163), who says: "The Lord was born in the month of January, on the same day on which



we celebrate the Epiphany, for of old the feasts of the Nativity and of Epiphany were kept on the same day, because on the same day He was born and baptised.

"The reason why our Fathers changed the solemnity celebrated on January 6th and transferred it to December 25th was . . . it was the custom of the heathens to celebrate the birthday of the sun on this very day, December 25th, and on it they lit lights on account of the feast.

"In these solemnities and festivities the Christians also participated. When, therefore, the Teachers observed that the Christians were inclined to this festival they took council and decided that the true Birth-feast be kept on this day, and on January 6th the Epiphanies."

On December 25th was the *Dies Natatit Solis Invicti*, "The Birth Day of the Invincible Sun," or the *Sol Novus* ("New Sun") as it was sometimes called, which event was especially cultivated by the votaries of Mithraism. Moreover, the great Roman *Saturnalia* closed on December 24th, and there can be little doubt but that the Church was anxious to distract the attention of its followers from the so-called "heathen feast-days" by the celebration of festivals of their own on these same days.

This is plainly hinted at, if not tacitly admitted, by Augustine when he exhorted his Christian brethren not to celebrate that solemn day like the heathen—on account of the sun—but on account of Him who made the sun; so it thus definitely appears that the Christian Church deliberately chose to celebrate the birth date of its Founder on the 25th of December in order to transfer the devotions of its followers, as well as that of the heathen if possible, from the sun itself to Him who was called the Son of Righteousness.

In passing, it may be mentioned that it is probable that the accepted date of the Birth of Christ was first fixed astronomically by the reasoning followed by the *de Pascha Computus*, and that use was afterwards made of the coincidence with the feast of the *Sol Novus*.

The coincidence is adequately accounted for by the fact that the early Christians were influenced by the idea that the coming of Christ as well as the Creation both occurred at the time of the Vernal Equinox. Placing the Vernal Equinox at that time on March 25th and considering "the coming of the Redeemer" to be the conception rather than the actual Nativity, the theory would appear logical, as under normal conditions the Birth would of course have occurred on December 25th.

Not only the dates, but the manner of the celebration of some festivals point to their definite connection with the sun. The ancient custom of rolling a burning wheel down a hill, for instance, is a definite imitation of the sun's course in the sky and especially appropriate on Midsummer Day—the Summer solstice, when the sun begins its downward course along the ecliptic.

It is no mere accident that the most important and widely-known fire festival coincides with the Winter solstice, for the Yule log (which is the counterpart of the Midsummer bonfire and figures so prominently in the popular celebration of Christmas) was originally designed as a kind of magic to assist the laboring sun of mid-winter in rekindling his seemingly expiring light.

In fact most of the customs, such as the Roman *Saturnalia* and the Teutonic *Yule* (*Thule*) Feast, which were the basis of the merry customs of our Christmas Season are not really Christian customs at all, but so-called "heathen customs" which

have been absorbed into or tolerated by the Church. Even "The Cradle of Christ," which is the characteristic object of reverence in Roman Catholic churches on Christmas Eve, is explained by Usener (*Weihnachtsfest*, p. 283) as having been borrowed from the cult of Adonis, and the cave or grotto where the child Adonis was fabled to have been born was itself adopted for Christian cult by the Empress Helena, and later (335 A.D.) richly endowed by the Emperor Constantine.

The Roman *Saturnalia*, which was celebrated from December 17th through the 24th and in honor of the god Saturn, was "a time of general joy and mirth. During the festival, schools were closed and no punishment was inflicted. All classes exchanged gifts, the commonest being wax tapers and clay dolls." (Frazer's *E. Br.* 9, XXI, 321.) This is strangely reminiscent of our present-day customs.

Outside Teutonic countries, Christmas presents as such were for many centuries unknown. In Latin countries their place was taken by the *strenae* (Fr. *etrennes*), which were commonly given on New Year's Day, and the setting up in Latin churches of a Christmas *crèche* is said to have been originated by St. Francis.

In ancient Britain, the 25th of December was a festival date long before the birth of Christ or conversion to Christianity, for Bede relates that "The ancient peoples of the Angli began the year on December 25th, when we now celebrate the birthday of the Lord; and the very night which is now so holy to us they called in their tongue *modra-necht* ('modra-niht'), or 'The Mother's Night,' by reason we suspect of the ceremonies which in that night-long vigil they performed." This again indicates the direct connection of our present-day Christmas festivities with the pagan custom of celebrating the new birth of the sun itself on that same date. It is also true that in 1644 an Act of Parliament utterly forbade the observance of Christmas celebrations, but Charles II revived the custom.

It has become clear that December 25th, which is still the approximate date of the Winter solstice, was originally the birth date of many solar deities, as this was and is the date upon which the sun seems to become renewed or reborn; that in the absence of definite information as to the exact date of the birth of Christ, this same date was fixed upon by the Fathers of the early Christian Church to divert the attention of their followers from the pagan celebrations in which they were showing unseemly interest; that we now, instead of celebrating on this date the birth day of the sun or some solar deity, celebrate thereon the Birthday of Him whose Father made the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Universe, and all therein contained. Who can logically find fault with the guileless substitution?

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## Die Drei Dinge

Waltther von der Vogelweide (1198 A.D.)

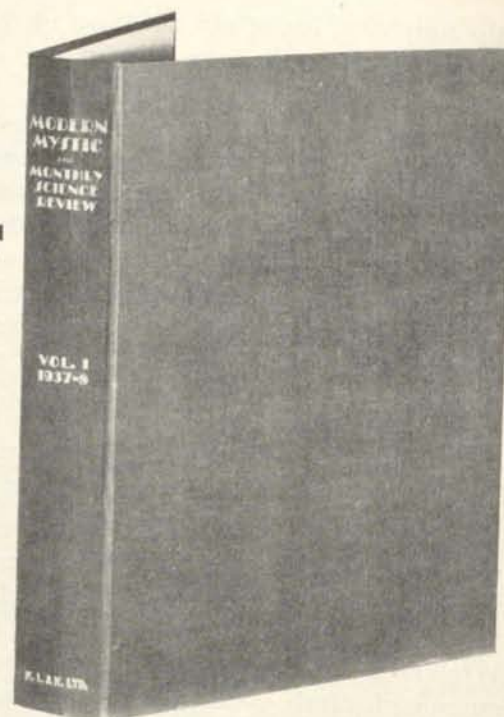
Gar bänglich bedachte ich mir,  
Weshalb man auf der Welt wohl sei.  
Es fiel mir keine Antwort bei,  
Wie man drei Ding' erwürbe,  
Dass keins davon verdürbe.  
Die zwei sind Ehr' und weltlich Gut,  
Das oft einander Schaden tut;  
Das dritt' ist Gott gefallen  
Das wichtigste von allen.  
Die wünscht' ich mir in einen Schrein.  
Doch leider kann das nimmer sein,  
Dass weltlich Gut und Ehre  
Und Gottes Huld je kehre  
Ein in dasselbe Menschenherz.  
Sie finden Hemmnis allerwärts:  
Untreu legt allenthalben Schlingen.  
Gewalt darf alles niederzwingen.  
So Fried als Recht sind Todeswund,  
Und nimmer finden Schutz die drei  
Eh' diese zwei nicht sind gesund.

## "Three Things"

Waltther von der Vogelweide (1198 A.D.)

English rendering by G. S. Francis

How can one live this earthly life aright?  
This question haunts my troubled mind,  
For nowhere can I answer find,  
How man the three things can acquire  
That no one perish.  
Honour and worldly wealth are two  
Though each is oft the other's foe.  
The third and greatest of them all  
Is pleasing God—Whate'er befall  
These would I cherish.  
But can it ever really be  
That human hearts can hold these three?  
Can love of God and human right  
And worldly wealth in one unite  
To dwell together in one human heart?  
Deluding snares and evil might  
Lie everywhere to do them hurt  
Till human weal and human right  
Lie crushed and wounded in the dirt.  
Yet nowhere can the three endure  
Until these two are made secure.



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# Readers' Letters

44 Orrell Road,  
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Liverpool, 20.  
Oct. 25th, 1937.

The Editor, "The Modern Mystic."

DEAR SIR,

In your November issue you describe the late Charles Fort as "one of the world's greatest sceptics"; a very accurate description which he confirms most particularly in the following item culled from *Lo!*:

"I believe nothing. I have shut myself away from the rocks and wisdoms of ages, and from the so-called great teachers of culture, and perhaps because of that isolation I am given to bizarre hospitalities. I shut the front door upon Christ and Einstein, and at the back door hold out a welcoming hand to little frogs and periwinkles."

Dr. Kolisko's articles on the Darwinian theory should make Charles Fort's slant on the same subject of topical interest to your readers. Here is the typically curt logic of the man, as expressed in his *The Book Of The Damned*:

"Science is established preposterousness.

The fittest survive.

What is meant by the fittest?

Not the strongest; not the cleverest—

Weakness and stupidity everywhere survive.

There is no way of determining fitness except in that a thing does survive.

'Fitness' then is only another name for 'survival.'

Darwinism:

That survivors survive."

Yours very sincerely,

ERIC FRANK RUSSELL.

10 York Gate,  
London, N.W.1.  
November 14th, 1937.

To the Editor, THE MODERN MYSTIC

DEAR SIR,

It was a pleasure to me to read "Interested's" letter in the November MODERN MYSTIC about Steiner and H. P. Blavatsky; because, even among Steiner's adherents there is still a little prejudice against the founder of Theosophy as a "mediumistic" occultist, and among Theosophists a strong tendency to assert that Steiner borrowed the foundations of his occultism from Blavatsky. It is true that the latter had mediumistic qualities of a high order; but it is not true that Steiner belittled her on this account; and it is certainly not true that his occultism was in any way dependent upon Blavatsky's.

I had some conversation with Dr. Steiner about Blavatsky from which I grew to understand—even if only in a small and fragmentary way—something of their respective (and quite different) missions. Moreover, Steiner indicated to me—it was in 1924 and therefore long after Blavatsky's death—that there was fundamental spiritual co-operation between them as certain occurrences had shown.

Also, in 1924, the year of the Torquay lectures which "Interested" mentions, I became quite unexpectedly the possessor of a batch of Blavatsky's letters. These included one that contained a pretty strong invective against a certain aspect of Christianity, quite understandable in the light of what Dr. Steiner has said about her. It also contained two short letters from the Master K. H. and the Master M. respectively (the latter written in red ink); and a paper containing the signatures of all those who were present when the letter from K. H. had been "precipitated" into their midst from somewhere in the

Indian Ocean. These were historical documents! And I had been greatly astonished at the extraordinary "chance" that had made me the possessor of them.

I took them with me to Torquay and showed them to Dr. Steiner. He was deeply interested, and asked if I would let him keep them for two or three days. And it was during these days that he spoke of Blavatsky and the "Moon Initiates" in the Torquay lectures as described by your correspondent "Interested."

Yours sincerely,

ELEANOR C. MERRY.

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# Book Reviews

"THE SECRET DOCTRINES OF JESUS." By Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, F.R.C. (A.M.O.R.C.) 10s. 6d.

*Reviewed by Raymund Andrea*

The name and work of Dr. Lewis are familiar to readers of this journal. He has many books to his credit, one of outstanding merit and interest being "The Mystical Life of Jesus," published in 1929. What particularly distinguished that book from the many "lives" of Jesus we have had was, that as a profound mystic and occultist, the author was qualified to treat his subject from esoteric sources of information accessible only to a few. It was therefore, as might be expected, heterodox and startling in its disclosures, and, as anticipated, disturbed the smug repose of orthodox religionists in no small measure.

There is another shock awaiting them in his new book, "The Secret Doctrines of Jesus." In it Dr. Lewis affirms that the original Christian doctrines constituted a system of transcendental truths, esoteric revelations and divine laws, not intended for all human beings; in support of which he adduces facts and interpretations which, if challenged, must be countered with superior ones.

One or two of these facts may be cited: "That the Christian church of to-day no longer practises or demonstrates those principles of healing or calling upon divine and natural law for unusual demonstrations, but concentrates almost exclusively upon preaching and postulating . . ."; "That a secret society was formed by Jesus and continued active after His ascension"; "That this society consisted of men and women numbering 120, and not merely of His 12 disciples"; "That the secret teaching of this society is concealed in parts of the New Testament and can only be linked up and interpreted by those who have the key to the esoteric system of this society."

Dr. Lewis gives a wealth of information supporting these facts, dealing with the Great Secret School and the secret mission of Jesus. He points the fact that cults outside the Christian churches are using divine laws and principles and demonstrations of wisdom, healing and mastery, and that analytical minds have come to suspect the churches for failing to show forth the wisdom, knowledge and power which they believe Jesus and His disciples possessed, and this is the cause of the heavy withdrawal of members in all Christian denominations.

"The Secret Doctrines of Jesus" is a most arresting document of esoteric research and scholarship. But the author says he has "no hope of having satisfied the average Christian clergyman or priest." This is only too sadly true. "To-day, everything in and of the Christian religion is subservient to churchianity." What particularly appeals to one in this book is the reverence and sweet reasonableness with which the author has treated his subject. With the unusual information at his disposal it could have been written, not without reverence, but in a manner to arouse bitter controversy. Perhaps it will do so. But the author is sure of his ground and unfolds his facts clearly and forcibly, with a nobleness and originality which leaves upon the mind a profound impression of irresistible truth. Whatever clergyman or priest may think of it, students of esotericism, Rosicrucians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Hermetists and Martinists, will welcome and feel the inspiration of it. I commend it strongly to the attention of every seeker of truth and lover of the Master.

THE QUEST OF THE OVERSELF. By Paul Brunton. (Rider.) 15s.

The reception accorded to Mr. Brunton's earlier works was sufficient guarantee of an eager public for the present book. It is in no patronising sense that we suggest that Mr. Brunton is now more mature. Indeed, this is a good sign, for it infers that the spiritual

adventures he so ably portrayed in the two "Secret Search" books were no mere momentary gleams but a quiet, yet determined way of life. *The Quest of the Overself* is by far the ablest thing Mr. Brunton has yet done. The book is divided into two parts; the first is really an analysis of Man; the second is devoted to practical exercises. If we have a criticism to make, it is that we consider the prefatory remarks too long and the subject of them redundant. For the author is in no need of apologising for his first essays in search of Truth. They were models of their particular kind. The difference between them and his latest book is the difference between endeavour and achievement. We are of the opinion that careful study of this book, and a determined attitude towards the recommended exercises will result in an appreciable measure of attainment. The book is well planned and the reader who appreciates art is well catered for in a splendid chapter, "The Finer Feelings." Mr. Brunton says: "When one leaves the kingdom of Nature and turns to that of art, . . . one finds further opportunity to train the emotions along the path which will lead to the spiritual opening of oneself. Poem, picture, prose, tune, monument and carving provide indeed a fascinating preliminary path towards the divine kingdom" and then follows a first-rate analysis of the spiritual genesis of art. There is an illuminating chapter on the true nature of Time and another on the creative inspirations of genius. The author's exposition of the Yoga involved is extraordinarily clear and simple, and the book shines with a patent sincerity. It is highly recommended.

H. L.

GOULD'S HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY. (Caxton Publishing Co. Ltd.)

Gould's great work has now been revised, edited, and brought up-to-date by Dudley Wright whose own contributions to the literature of the "Craft" are considerable, particularly his "Woman and Freemasonry." The "History" in this present edition is in five large volumes, complete with ample index; has many fascinating full-page plates in colour, and may be purchased on an extended payment plan if desired. Volume one covers the period from the Ancient Mysteries—the Essenes, Roman Collegia and the Culdees down to the grant of arms to the "Hole Crafte and felawship of Masons" dated 1472-3. Nevertheless, Seymour in his *Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, as is pointed out, says the date of incorporation of the company was "about 1410, having been called Free-Masons, a Fraternity of great Account. . . ." Volume one contains eight full-page plates. Volume two covers the history of Masonry in England from about 1717, (the date from which the official history of Masonry is considered to be authentic) until the end of the eighteenth century. One of the chief merits of this work is the patient research which has examined all documents available to the author and present editor and which prove that masonry, especially in the south of England was very active long years before 1717. The second volume contains 10 full-page plates. The first chapter of volume three should prove of extreme interest to all masons and students of the history of the craft. It begins with a copy of the "minutes" of the "Grand Committee of the Most Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons at the Griffin Tavern in Holborn, London, Feb. 5th, 1752. Mr. James Hagarty in the Chair." A note on the original states that "The above Mr. Hagarty is a painter and now lives in Leather Lane, London." Then follows a list of the "Rules and Orders to be Observed." The remainder of the volume which carries 32 full-page plates, gives the history of Grand Lodge, and full-dress accounts of Masonry in Ireland and Scotland. The fourth volume is an account of Masonry on the Continent of Europe and in the near East. There are eleven full-page plates. Of great importance to students of mysticism is the account in chapter one of the Chevalier Ramsay. The last volume covers the history of the Craft in the Americas, Indies, Hawaii, Asia, and Australasia and has excellent chapters on the Sea and Field Lodges, "The Holy Royal Arch," the Mark Degree, the Ancient and Accepted Rite and other Masonic Rites. There are four full-page plates. We have only one serious criticism to make, and that is the totally mis-informed account of Cagliostro. Surely, references to this "swindler," the "arch-enemy," etc., are by this time redundant? We hope that in a



future edition the Editor will take into account the complete debunking of the Balsamo legend by Trowbridge. Nor is there any mention, in the section dealing with the Rosicrucians, of St. Germain. But as a standard work, designed to give the reader some account of the physical history of Masonry, without which it is hardly possible to grasp its esoteric significance, the work is invaluable, easy to read, and is beautifully produced.

W.

THE GOSPEL OF HEALTHY-MINDEDNESS. By Charles Wase, M.A., Ph.D. (J. M. Watkins.) 5s.

These "twelve lessons relating the Inner to the Outer Life" are really essays in applied psychology, but by a man who had certain natural gifts as a teacher and more than a nodding acquaintance with the principles that lie back of the technique of analyses. In the opinion of this reviewer, the seventh "lesson,"—that on Concentration,—is alone worth the purchase price of the book for it debunks with easy common-sense that greatest of all illusions,—the alleged difficulty of the act. "Memory and Intuition," "Constructive Thinking," "Laws of Success and Character-Building" are other informative chapters well worth attention. There is an appreciative character-sketch of the author by Allen Watkins.

H. K.

I FOLLOW MY STARS. By Louis de Wohl. (Harrap.) 8s. 6d.

The author of this book is well-known on the Continent as a novelist, scenario-writer and playwright. In this essay in autobiography there is not a dull moment. It is an ideal book for travelling and a guaranteed tonic for any depressed spirit. It is typical of this age in so far that an otherwise "hard-headed" man, young, adventurous and eminently successful, because of the proven accuracy of one or two points in a well-cast horoscope, immediately becomes enslaved by the ancient science which, however fool-proof it once was, is now, because of our evolution, by no means 100 per cent. accurate. The author does nothing without consulting his stars; he is no longer his own man. An ominous conjunction, a few days distant, is sufficient to send him scuttling off to the Continent in the vain hope that he will dodge its influence on the cross-channel boat. Still, it's a book to read; but beware, or the author will convince you of the incontrovertible accuracy of the birth-horoscope.

McN.

YOGA EXPLAINED. By F. Yeats-Brown. (Gollancz.) 7s. 6d.

The famous author of *Bengal Lancer* in his new book has written what is perhaps the best and clearest exposition of Yoga published during recent years. There are 26 illustrations, some of them in half-tone. The book in its nature is somewhat technical, and for that reason we doubt the advisability of quotation. There are many books on the market purporting to describe Yoga; many that are not utterly useless are definitely dangerous. Major Yeats-Brown's book is recommended.

S. M.

SECRETS OF HANDWRITING. By Refael Schermann. (Rider.) 5s.

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usefulness of a deep study of graphology may be in doubt, nevertheless its fascination is undeniable. The author of this little book has a great reputation as a master of his art of interpreting handwriting. He has been thoroughly tested by scientists both in Europe and America. "Secrets of Handwriting" has already appeared in German, French and Swedish. We may be thankful that not many possess Dr. Schermann's extraordinary gift, or we should be more sparing of our signatures. Hans Richter, Johann Strauss, Franz Lehar, Countess Zeppelin and Maria Jeritz are only a few of the signatures which in this volume are analysed and apparently with complete success.

H. L.

THE TEACHING OF THE STAR. By George Tanner. (Rider.) 3s. 6d.

The price of this little book is out of all comparison to its undoubted merit. The author is an elderly man, and this is his first book. He has obvious psychic gifts,—so have many other people, but they have not the same critical gift which Mr. Tanner brings to his particular experiences. Apparently without training and deep study, but by the quiet and better way of meditation, the author has established contact with what spiritualists would call his "guide" but what, although the same thing, is understood in a different way by older and more knowledgeable dicta. He has arrived at an explanation of Evolution by way of ancient symbolism,—the significance of which will not be lost on freemasons and Rosicrucians,—that in some measure gives fuller meaning to the Bible. The chapters on the Symbols of the Zodiac and the Plagues of Egypt are original in their treatment. The 128 pages comprising the book are a marvel of condensation. The book should be read and re-read.

N. V. D.



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